The SPORTS PINK
Saturday, August 10, 2013
55p
Supporting LOCAL sport
Daily Echo
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CHERRIES ARE HANDED A SIX-GOAL HAMMERING

See page 2

Jason's goal clinches comeback but – but Shaw injury mars win

SAINTS LAND FINAL PUNCH

SAINTS rounded off their pre-season campaign with a 4-3 win over Real Sociedad.

Jason Puncheon's goal seven minutes from time gave Mauricio Pochettino's men a morale boosting victory over the Spanish side in a game in which they had led three times but been pegged back.

The match also threw up plenty of questions for the Saints boss to answer just a week before the Premier League kick-off at West Brom and a major injury worry over Luke Shaw.

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NON-LEAGUE

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SOCIAL CLUBS

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The Beautiful South with Daren Wheeler

Chris and Rickie – an inspiration!

IT WAS in 2001 when I first interviewed Chris Marsden for the pages of Beautiful South.

Chris was, and still is, one of my favourite ever Saints players. You can argue, quite successfully, that there have been many more technically gifted, but few have appealed to the footballing romantic in me more than he.

Here was a player who had seemingly had his shot at the big time. A brief flirtation with the Premier League at Coventry that never resulted in an actual game. It looked like his chance had gone.

Then came Stockport. Then the Saints, and Chris got his chance… and, boy, did he take it.

Marsden went on to hit the form of his life and become the mainstay of the team. With Marsden in front of him, Wayne Bridge became worthy of a call up for England. It's fair to say he was crucial in Wayne's development as a top class player.

His time at Saints culminated in one of the best Saints goals ever against Ipswich, a goal that, had it been scored by Ryan Giggs in an FA Cup game, would still be shown on TV today.

Chris Marsden was one of my favourite ever Saints players and a top, top man; a genuinely nice guy who was given a chance and had the time of his life.

RICKIE LAMBERT

I never thought I'd see the likes of him again in my lifetime. Until I saw Sir Rickie Lambert.

You cannot underestimate the importance of Sir Rickie, quite possibly one of the most important players this club has ever seen.

Up there with the Channons, the Le Tissiers and the Keegans, a man who oversaw the rise of this football club from the depths of League One to the heights of the Premier League.

He is the catalyst that kickstarted the fairytale.

Rickie Lambert really is that important. The news that he had been named in the England squad put the icing on the cake. There can seldom have been a more deserving England call up than this?

A humble hard working player who has raised his game at every level he's faced.

How many people thought he'd struggle in the Championship? He went on to become the top goalscorer in that league. How many people thought he'd fade away into obscurity in the Premiership? He went on to become the joint top goalscoring Englishman in that league.

At every level he's played, every challenge he's faced, Lambert has stepped up to the plate.

His inclusion in the England squad has set the armchair plastic fans off into a frenzy. The BBC's message board was bombarded with claims that his inclusion is a sign that England have run out of ideas, some even bemoaning the omission of Darren Bent for crying out loud.

For one moment, forget the likes of Rooney and his hot and cold England attendances. Forget the usual suspects who always seem to pick up knocks when their national side comes a calling.

Why not play someone who desperately wants to play for his country for whom playing for his country would be the greatest honour of his career?

I lost faith in England a long time ago – a team that had the talent but, for some reason, seemed lacklustre and uninterested when it came to the big international games.

I once wrote "Rickie Lambert, your country needs you" and it's never been more apt than now.

Your country needs the lad from League One to have the game of his lifetime to inspire a raft of

Saints Spotlight

SAINTS 4 REAL SOCIEDAD 3: Poch's team in

SAINTS QUICK OFF THE MARK

ON THE SPOT: Rickie Lambert and Liassine Cadamuro go head to head.

SAINTS rounded off their pre-season campaign with a 4-3 win over Real Sociedad.

Jason Puncheon's goal seven minutes from time gave Mauricio Pochettino's men a morale boosting victory over the Spanish side in a game in which they had led three times but been pegged back, ***writes ADAM LEITCH.***

The match also threw up plenty of questions for the Saints boss to answer just a week before the Premier League kick-off at West Brom and a major injury worry over Luke Shaw.

The teenage left back had to be helped from the field just before half time with what looked a worrying knee injury that surely rules him out of England under-21 duty in midweek – the fourth time that will have happened – and makes him a major doubt for the season opener.

Also a big doubt for that game will be Nathaniel Clyne, whose injury meant he was again unable to figure.

Saints got off to a great start as they took the lead after just seven minutes.

Rickie Lambert, fresh from his England call-up, produced a superb ball to Adam Lallana who was calmness personified to control and finish.

Saints poured the pressure on Sociedad with some superb interplay between the attacking players and with some of their Spanish counterparts looking a little disinterested.

Jay Rodriguez forced the keeper into two smart saves, Shaw's surging run almost brought rewards while Jos Hooiveld's effort from a corner was hacked off the line.

Despite all that Sociedad equalised against the run of play on 29 minutes.

Some awful Saints defending, missing several attempts to clear inside their own box, led to Gorka Elustondo being allowed to finish for 1-1.

It didn't stay that way for long though as central midfield pair Victor Wanyama and Morgan Schneidlerin linked up with the former playing in the latter who finished.

Once again the lead didn't last long, five minutes on this occasion, as a simple diagonal ball cross field ball landing in the path of Carlos Vela.

He took one touch to control and

Cherries take hammering

TROY DEENEY scored a hat-trick as Watford moved top of the fledgling Sky Bet Championship table and signalled an early warning of their promotion credentials with a 6-1 win against Cherries.

Gabrielle Angella, the Italian defender who moved to Vicarage Road from Udinese in the summer, gave Gianfranco Zola's side the lead before Watford were pegged back by Lewis Grabban's equaliser.

Angella and Deeney scored in quick succession to put Watford back in control and the Hornets, who were the leading goalscorers in the division last season, then turned on the style.

Lewis McGugan scored the fourth before Deeney completed his hat-trick with a powerful 20-yard strike into the corner and a last-minute penalty.

Nottingham Forest and Blackpool are the only other teams so far to have opened their Championship campaign with two victories but both left it late to win today.

Forest snatched the points against Blackburn with a last-minute strike from Darius Henderson after a mistake from Rovers goalkeeper Jake Kean, while an own-goal from Barnsley's Scott Wiseman sealed a dramatic late victory for Blackpool.

Barnsley's defeat leaves them as one of six teams yet to win a point in the Championship and they are joined down the bottom of the table by Millwall, who were beaten 3-0 by Ipswich.

Mick McCarthy's men took the lead in fortunate fashion with an own-goal from Shane Lowry but they built on that with headers from Tommy Smith and Paul Anderson to seal the win.

Charlton also suffered their second successive league defeat of the season as Middlesbrough, having lost to Leicester and Accrington Stanley, finally tasted victory with a Lukas Jutkiewicz goal.

Burnley may have lost striker Charlie Austin but they had enough of a goal threat to beat Sheffield Wednesday 2-1, with Danny Ings and Sam Vokes putting them ahead before David Prutton bagged a consolation.

Derby came from behind to beat Brighton 2-1, with Chris Martin scoring both goals after Jose Ulloa had put the Seagulls in front.

Yeovil's first home match in the Championship ended in a disappointing defeat to Birmingham, who won with a Danny Seaborne own goal.

QPR striker Junior Hoilett cancelled out an early strike from James Vaughan to earn a point for Harry Redknapp's side at Huddersfield.

The honours were also even at the Reebok Stadium, where Darren Pratley put Bolton ahead against the run of play before Nick Blackman equalised for the Royals from the penalty spot.

TODAY'S FOOTBALL SCORES ARE ON PAGE 40

Saints Spotlight

a treble comeback at St Mary's

Watch Saints online

● To see free Saints video interviews log onto *daily echo.co.uk* and click on the Daily Echo Video News section of the website.

ON THE SPOT: Jos Hooiveld makes it 3-2 to Saints – and celebrates below.

another to fire low into the far corner.

Another Saints goal was quick to arrive however as Jos Hooiveld headed home Lallana's corner.

Lambert found himself in the book after shoving Alberto de la Bella, who was also cautioned for his part in an unseemly flare up in the corner, before the injury to Shaw meant an entertaining half finished on a worrying note.

The second half never competed as spectacle with both sides continually making changes.

Sociedad levelled things up on 59 minutes as Vela played in Haris Seferovic who forced home via the inside of the near post.

Just when it seemed the game was destined to finished level Puncheon came up with the winner.

There was certainly a hint of fortune about it as Lloyd Isgrove totally mishit a shot which ended up turning into an assist for Puncheon.

There was also a hint of offside about it too, but Puncheon was determined not to miss out on any luck coming his way and duly finished off from close range to secure the win.

Saints: Boruc (K Davis 46), Chambers (Cork 62), Lovren (Yoshida 62), Hooiveld (Fonte 46), Shaw (Fox 45), Wanyama (Ward-Prowse 62), Schneiderlin (Isgrove 75), Lallana (Punchon75), Do Prado (S Davis 46), Rodriguez (Mayuka 75), Lambert (Ramirez 46).
Real Sociedad: Bravo, Sangalli, Ansotegi, Cadamuro (Martinez 46), De la Bella, X Prieto (Zurutuza 67), Elustondo, Ros (Pardo 67), Vela, Seferovic, Chory (Griezmann 62)
Att: 8,434

Poch hoping for the best over Shaw injury

MAURICIO Pochettino believes that Luke Shaw has sustained ligament damage to his left knee – but is hoping it doesn't prove to be too serious.

The teenage Saints left back had to be helped from the field just before half time in the final pre-season friendly of the summer against Real Sociedad at St Mary's after sustaining the injury.

Saints are awaiting a full diagnosis of the problem, but if it does prove to be ligament damage he is likely to be ruled out of the start of the season and is all but certain to have to drop out of the England under-21 squad for the fourth time through injury. However, Pochettino at least sounded hopeful that the injury wasn't a serious ligament problem which could keep Shaw out for months rather than days or weeks.

"In principle it is his knee but we still need to know what the doctors will say," said the Saints boss.

"He has a problem in his ligament but we need to see what the doctors diagnose.

"We will have to see. He had to leave the stadium and the pitch and hopefully the problem is not as big as it looked and he will be ok."

He added: "The pre-season is over now and we are doubtful and hoping it's nothing too serious what happened to Luke Shaw.

"I think we have done well but there are certain things we need to improve from this game. We have a bit of a better feeling because we have been playing well without injuries and hopefully it isn't too serious and we can count on him for the start of the season."

Alresford sink the new boys

BROCKENHURST 0 ALRESFORD 2

A STUART Mott header and a Warren Bentley penalty secured Alresford Town a 2-0 victory at Sydenhams Premier Division new boys Brockenhurst this afternoon.

Brock applied good early pressure and, with Warren Kenna prominent, forced three early corners to put Alresford on the back foot, ***writes WENDY GEE.***

The Magpies struggled to find their passing game initially, but finally won a flag kick of their own ten minutes in – Stuart Mott heading Warren Bentley's delivery wide.

Brock failed to learn their lesson and, when Alresford forced another corner three minutes later, they failed to pick-up MOTT whose rose to meet Bentley's cross at the near post and glanced it into the far corner.

The visitors should have got another seconds later, but Simon Everett shot hurriedly wide after Lee Clark's mistake had presented him with the ball.

Mark Barker's bending shot drifted just wide at the other end before Dominic Cope had all the time in the world to bring down Bentley's cross, but dug his shot into the ground.

The Magpies' movement was suddenly causing Brock all sorts of problems, leaving the home side reliant on a couple of half chances for new strike signing Scott Joyce.

Alresford were now becoming a real handful and they extended their lead on 25 minutes when Clark was all over Bentley as he latched onto Zach Glasspool's pass inside the box. Referee Connor Farrell pointed to the spot and BENTLEY proved lethal from 12 yards.

ON TARGET: Warren Bentley.

Brock kept plugging away and, when Joyce found himself alone up front, he held the ball up well before passing to the over-lapping Dan Smith. He in turn found Kenna but the experienced midfield scuffed his shot.

The livewire Barker then tested Jason Collins with a superb low cross from the left which the keeper did well to hold with Smith closing in.

That was the start of a promising spell for Pat McManus's Badgers, with Kenna's superb 35-yard shot turned round the post by Collins, who then saved Dave Marden's downward header from the subsequent corner.

Kenna sent another effort wide of the mark as the blue and white stripes kept pushing forward and then, following a neat passage of passing football by Brock, Barker's left-foot shot hit the bottom of the post.

Half-time: Brockenhurst 0
Alresford Town 2

The New Forest hosts emerged in positive mood after the break and Barker wasn't far away with a well struck effort from the left of the area.

Brock keeper Scott O'Rourke then stood-up well to Bentley as the threatened on the left before the Badgers went back of the offensive.

Alresford came under all sorts of pressure as Dan Maher broke down the left and sent in a superb cross which, in trying to clear, Magpies' defender Lee Wood mishit onto his own crossbar.

The ball pinged dangerously around the area but Alresford threw bodies in the way and survived.

As another free-flowing half of football unfolded, Bentley and Mike McEnery doubled up to terrorise Brock down the right but a promising move ended with a soft shot by Glasspool.

The Badgers took off Smith and threw on Will Tickle just before the hour as Brock looked for more bite up front, but it was Alresford who had the next shot on target – albeit that O'Rourke saved comfortably from Cope.

Bright spark Barker was still having plenty of joy for Brock down the left and sub Tickle had some promising moments on the right but, try as they might, the home side couldn't find a finish.

On 73 minutes Kenna produced the pass of the match to pick out Barker, but the winger's touch was marginally too strong and the chance vanished.

Then Collins produced a good save to deny Kenna after Tickle had played him in.

Alresford, though were dangerous on the break and Brock survived a scare when Bentley hit the underside of the crossbar from sub Suhael Odeh's assist.

With the game getting a tad bad-tempered in the closing stages, Brock had a penalty shout turned down for a shove on Joyce.

REACTION FROM TODAY'S MATCH IN MONDAY'S DAILY ECHO

SOUTHERN Daily Echo

FIND THE BALL

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FIND THE BALL is a test of skill and football knowledge and is open to readers of the Southampton, Bournemouth, Dorset Echos, Brighton Argus and Sunday Independent, Plymouth.

You have to use your skill and judgement to determine the exact centre of the ball.

Mark an X with a ballpoint pen on the picture where you consider that position to be – clear rubber stamps and self adhesive labels will also be accepted.

Every coupon will be carefully examined and the jackpot prize will be paid to the entrant whose cross marks the exact centre of the ball when the photograph was taken.

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The nearest-miss prize will be paid out to the competitor whose cross is nearest to the centre of the ball when there is no jackpot winner.

When a jackpot has been won the next week's prize reverts back to £6,000 and the nearest-miss prize at £1,000.

If the Jackpot is not won after 45 weeks, when standing at £50,000, three nearest miss prizes will be awarded totalling £24,000 – with a first prize of £12,000, a second prize of £8,000 and a third prize of £4,000.

The jackpot for the following week will be £26,000 with £1,000 being added each week. The nearest miss prize will be £2,000 with £50 added each week until the jackpot prize reaches £50,000.

If there is still no entry showing the exact centre of the ball, the process is repeated until there is an exact centre of the ball winner.

If there is more than one winner the jackpot will be shared and, similarly, if there is more than one runner-up the nearest miss prize will also be shared.

RESULTS

CLOSING DATE FOR POSTAL ENTRIES
Thursday 9am, 15 Aug 2013
Names of winners will be published on Saturday, 17 Aug or Sunday 18 Aug 2013

Winners

Competition number **S29**

JACKPOT WINNER **NO WINNER**

CONGRATULATIONS
Miss J Saunders, Southampton, Hants
who wins the nearest miss prize of £2,750

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Mrs J Cockings, Southampton, Hants
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Mrs S Dupont, Romsey, Hants
Miss C Langdown, Southampton, Hants
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Miss J Martin, Southampton, Hants
Mr G Merewether, Bishopstoke, Hants
Mrs P Penney, Southampton, Hants
Mrs S Shelley, Southampton, Hants
Mrs J Steele, Southampton, Hants
Mr R Taylor, Eastleigh, Hants
Mrs C Walsh, Southampton, Hants
Mrs J Wiseman, Southampton, Hants
Mr M Woronezak, Eastleigh, Hants

Rules

1. You are allowed a minimum of 60 crosses and a maximum of 325 per coupon. Coupons with 326 or more will be disqualified. Entries altered defaced or mutilated will be invalid. Crosses must be distinct and separate. **2.** Competitors may submit as many coupons as they wish. Members of a family can send their entries in one envelope with a covering postal order or cheque. **3.** No responsibility can be accepted for entries delayed, lost or mislaid. Proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery. **4.** Payment may be made by postal order or cheque for the correct amount payable to Newsquest, and crossed '& Co.' Stamps **will not** be accepted in payment. **5.** A competitor cannot win more than one share of the prize money across all titles each week. **6.** The Editor's decision on winning entry or entries and matters relating to this competition is binding in honour only. NO CORRESPONDENCE CAN BE ENTERED INTO. **7.** Employees of NEWSQUEST Media Group and subsidiary companies and members of their families are not eligible to enter the competition. **8.** Address entries to FTB PO Box 24 Competitions, Southampton SO16 9ZD in a sealed envelope. Understamped entries are not accepted. **9.** Prize monies are held for and on behalf of winners. **10.** Do not send cash in the post. **11.** Winners will be required to participate in publicity. **12.** Photocopies not accepted. **13.** For rules go to www.dailyecho.co.uk/promotions/rules, www.newsquest.co.uk/terms or write in for a copy.

An incident in a Portswood v Itchen Saints match

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Paine's World

The Saints legend's EXCLUSIVE column on all things football

FOR MERSEY'S SAKE LET'S PLAY

HOW I long for the football season proper to kick-off, so we can start speaking about the happenings on the pitch rather than the dealings off it.

The Luis Suárez saga hit new levels this week, with a resolution seemingly nowhere in sight.

In what is the longest-running transfer drama this summer, a proposed deal between Liverpool and Arsenal continues to drag its feet, not unlike the stroppy Uruguayan, who finds himself firmly in the centre of this ongoing tug-of-war.

In a bid to tip the scales in favour of his planned destination, Suárez has turned on his employers for the second time in his short career, as he tries to mastermind a move away from Anfield in the hope of securing Champions League football at Arsenal.

It has been clear throughout the summer that Suárez will do whatever is necessary to further his own interests and, in a final twist of irony, he turned to the media. The same media that was stated as the reason for his supposed unhappiness in England.

His amazing about-turn has left most people questioning whether we can believe a single word he says.

Can we trust a man who says one thing, then does another?

At the heart of the problem is the supposed promise made by Brendan Rodgers and Liverpool that he would be allowed to leave for Champions League football if Liverpool failed to qualify for Europe's elite competition last season.

"I spoke with Brendan Rodgers several times and he told me: 'Stay another season and you have my word, if we don't make it then I will personally make sure that you can leave,'" Suárez says. "I just want them to abide by the promises made last season."

If that is the case, then Liverpool face the indignity of having their dirty laundry aired to all and sundry once again. It has become a recurring theme at Anfield since the arrival of the Uruguayan.

Having backed Suárez to the hilt, often to the detriment of their reputation, Liverpool and their fans have every right to feel aggrieved by this latest act of mutiny.

Throughout his spell at Liverpool, Suárez has been embraced by the fans, who were quick to forgive him his faults off the field for his performances on it.

That he received a massive ovation at both Steven Gerrard's testimonial and the open training session this week seems to have gone straight over his head.

He wants out. And by getting the Premier League and the PFA involved, surely his wish will be granted.

Suárez understandably wants to take his game to the next level, and there is no doubt that a player of his unquestionable talent should be playing on club football's biggest stage.

"I have to put my career first," Suárez says. "People say Liverpool deserve more from me but I have scored 50 goals in less than 100 games and now they could double the money they paid for me.

"It is not as if I am asking to move to a local rival."

While Arsenal may not be Everton or Manchester United, it is difficult not to consider them a direct rival of the Reds, especially in the battle for much-vaunted Champions League football.

What makes his insistence of a move to Arsenal even more perplexing is the fact that they are yet to qualify for the Champions League proper.

Best he beware what he wishes for. The Gunners have scraped into Europe's elite for the last few seasons, and it's difficult to imagine that the Uruguayan's arrival will suddenly see them challenging for titles and European glory, no matter how talented an individual he is.

Or perhaps he sees the Emirates as another stepping-stone to the top. A stopgap before his inevitable move to Spain.

And what of Arsenal? Quiet observers of this Merseyside melodrama, have they not questioned the merits of signing a player with an unrivalled rap sheet?

Biting, racism allegations, courtroom battles.

Or are they able to overlook all these attributes, and look only at his statistics?

He is a player they could use on the pitch, but that is not the only consideration when it comes to Suárez.

While Gareth Bale is being wooed in an £80m deal, there is a reason why Suárez is only valued at around half that.

While he has spent the summer trying to manufacture a move abroad, nothing materialised because no one was willing to take a gamble, because he remains a liability.

Arsenal are his last resort, that much is clear to see.

Now they have to decide whether to throw him a lifebuoy to grab a hold of.

In one final twist of fate it seems surreal that two historic clubs are willing to drag their names through the mud and part with huge sums of cash on a player that wouldn't have been given the time of day if he weren't so damn talented.

He has reached a point of no return at Liverpool, and yet still they cling to him in the hope that he may take them back to the promised land.

For Arsenal, it is less of a want and more of a need if they are to turn themselves from also-rans into title contenders.

And with £40 million being spent on a footballer that neither team can surely want anymore, it's just another indication of how mad football has really gone.

Bring on the football and let this silly season come to an end.

MONEY COUNTS: There is a reason why Luis Suárez, left, is valued only around half as much as Gareth Bale, right.

Non-league Football

Non-league News

Watch Spitfires for free

EASTLEIGH want their stars of the future to be cheering on the current squad when Richard Hill's men open their Skrill Conference South campaign at home to Sutton United next Saturday.

The Spitfires are inviting all their academy, development and Tyro/mini soccer players to watch the game free of charge.

One parent will be given free entry and any additional parents/guardians will be let in half price. Gates open from 1.30pm and youngsters are asked to report to Gate A on the day.

Babb gets his man

FORMER Salisbury City striker Jake Reid has completed a move to Skrill Conference South club Hayes & Yeading.

Bristol-based Reid, below, whose CV also includes spells with Newport County, Bath City and AFC Telford, was not short on clubs wanting to sign him, but Hayes boss Phil Babb was determined to get his man.

Ex-Liverpool defender Babb said: "I got the job here on May 9 and was talking to Jake by May 12.

"He has got Conference National pedigree and helped Welling gain promotion last year by socring four goals in nine games for them."

Ward commits to Town

HIGHLY-RATED attacking midfielder Elliot Ward has agreed a one-year deal with Skrill Conference South club Dorchester Town.

After a string of highly impressive pre-season performances, the Dorset-born 19-year-old has committed himself to the Greene King Stadium for 2013/14.

Magpies boss Phil Simkin is naturally delighted to have secured the services of the sought-after former AFC Bournemouth playmaker.

"Elliot has signed for the club and turned down several, what you could call, lucrative offers in non-League football to come here and play for very little," he said.

A product of the Cherries youth system, Ward made his League debut against Dagenham in August 2011 but was released at the end of the season.

Wendy Gee
wendy.gee@dailyecho.co.uk
NON-LEAGUE REPORTER

RIGHT TEAMS IN WRONG ORDER

Hill's pre-season concern

GOING LOW: Salisbury's Brian Dutton challenges Eastleigh's Michael Green during the pre-season clash.

IN AN ideal world Richard Hill would not have wanted Eastleigh to round off their pre-season campaign against a Calor Southern Division One club today.

With no disrespect to hosts North Leigh, the Spitfires boss would have preferred to have played them earlier in the summer and finished off against higher league opposition before launching into next Saturday's big Skrill Conference South opener at home to Sutton United.

But circumstances have dictated that, to a degree, Eastleigh's warm-up games have come the wrong way round.

They started off with a 3-0 home defeat by League Two side Wycombe Wanderers and then went to the opposite extreme, winning 6-1 away at Hellenic League Wantage Town.

Successive home games against higher opposition have followed, starting off with a 2-1 win over Aldershot Town, which replaced the original date set for the North Leigh trip on July 20.

The Spitfires then tasted defeat against a Southampton XI, containing the likes of Lee Barnard, Billy Sharp and Tadanari Lee, and Conference National duo Woking and Salisbury.

"Looking back on our pre-season, I've not been 100 per cent happy with the games we've had, but as far as the performances within those games are concerned, there have been good passages of play that I've been pleased with and some that I've not been so pleased with," admitted Hill, pictured right.

"But because of the Football League and the Conference Premier starting earlier, it's been hard to get the balance right.

"Normally you'd want to start with more of a practice match and then build up to a couple of Football League teams.

"My original plan was to play Romsey in the first game, because they helped us with a friendly last season, and then move on to Wantage.

"But the Wycombe manager Gareth Ainsworth, who's a lovely chap and an absolute legend, actually phoned me and suggested a game, so what was I supposed to do, turn it down?

"We'd only done four training sessions when we played them whereas they'd started two-and-a-half weeks prior because their season was starting a fortnight before ours (on August 3).

"It's very difficult to try and structure pre-season when the leagues all start on different dates.

"Yes, I could have turned down some games and cherry-picked the opposition a bit better, but if Wycombe, Aldershot, Woking, Southampton and Salisbury phone me and say 'would you like to play us?' who am I to turn round and say 'no'?

"To my mind everyone should be overjoyed that clubs like that are asking us to play them.

"Ideally I would like to have played Romsey first game, then someone along the lines of Winchester, then North Leigh, then a Conference club and finishing off with a League club.

"We've had a tough pre-season against tough opposition and we've played some of the games earlier than we'd normally like, but we've been in a tricky situation."

Last Saturday's 2-1 reverse against Salisbury was Eastleigh's third straight defeat.

But, as in the previous games, there were plenty of pluses with quality players like Ben Strevens, Stuart Fleetwood. Will Evans, Jamie Collins and Yemi Odubade giving a taster of what they have to offer the Conference South.

Midfielder Evans, though, went off with a knee injury, ruling him out of today's North Leigh game.

New Salisbury signing Ben Wright fired Whites ahead, cashing in on some fatal hesitation from ex-Saints academy goalkeeper Jack Dovey.

Jai Reason equalised with a sublime finish from Odubade's cross, but Robbie Sinclair had the final say for the Conference National new boys.

Whites boss Mikey Harris had admitted beforehand that the Eastleigh game was Salisbury's most important friendly because the Spitfires were as near as they would get to Conference National opposition.

He acknowledged afterwards: "It was a competitive game played in the right spirit and a good test for us."

Match-winner Zebroski ready to take 'second chance'

EASTLEIGH boss Richard Hill always knew Chris Zebroski had the ability to play higher again – and so it has proved.

The pacy 26-year-old frontrunner, pictured right, was named man-of-the-match last Saturday when, after a 25-year absence, Newport County marked their return to the Football League by smashing Accrington 4-1 at Rodney Parade.

Zebroski scored twice on a dream debut for the Exiles whom he joined in June after signing for Eastleigh on a non-contract basis in February and helping Hill's men to the Conference South play-offs.

Hill would dearly have loved to have kept the Swindon-born frontrunner at the Silverlake, but in his heart of hearts he always knew Zebroski was destined to go back to the Football League after stints with Plymouth Argyle, Millwall, Torquay and Bristol Rovers.

Reflecting on his eye-catching start for Newport, Zebroski said: "I was pleased with the start of my partnership with Christian Jolley.

"We both like to run in the channels. Arguably we are similar players, but I thought I saw signs of a great partnership. Hopefully you won't see too many faster partnerships than Christian and me."

Zebroski had had some off-the-field troubles prior to joining Eastleigh, but his stint at the Silverlake appears to have got him back on track.

"This is a second chance for me in the Football League and the gaffer (Newport boss Justin Edinburgh) has been brilliant with me," he said. "He's an excellent man manager and I hope he's going to keep getting the best out of me."

Saluting Zebroski's sparkling debut, Edinburgh said: "The two goals capped off a tireless game from Zebroski. The amount of work he gets through is tireless and he occupies the back four on his own at times.

"We're really pleased for him because we know he's had his personal problems, but I feel there's a lot more to come from him."

Zebroski was on the winning side again on Tuesday when Newport stunned Championship hopefuls Brighton & Hove Albion 3-1 in the Capital One Cup.

TODAY'S NON-LEAGUE RESULTS – SEE BACK PAGE

Non-league Football

HITMAN WORT HAS FORBES RECORD IN HIS SIGHTS

PROLIFIC: Sholing striker Lee Wort.

SHOLING boss Dave Diaper says Andy Forbes' Sydenhams Premier goal scoring record is a "dangling carrot" for his striker Lee Wort.

Forbes, pictured below,who netted an unbelievable 55 times in the Wessex in 2003/04 for Winchester City, has held the record for nine seasons, ***writes PETER HOWARD***.

Now Wort, the prolific 21-year-old Boatmen's forward, has set his sights on beating it.

Former Saints striker Jamie White is the only man who came close to beating the landmark while he was at the Denplan City Ground two years ago.

With three games left White, now at Skrill Conference Premier side Salisbury City, needed 11 goals to take the award and managed four in two matches before falling a single goal short after a double in the last fixture.

Wort got 35 goals in the Calor One South & West last term and has already netted six in two matches this season, grabbing four against US Portsmouth in the Sydenhams League Cup and a brace in the 5-0 Wessex Premier defeat of Romsey Town on Tuesday.

His manager has all faith that he has the talent to get his name in the record books, saying: "He is well capable of doing it, he shoots at every opportunity.

"It's one of those key things for him this year, he wants to beat that record. We're a club looking to the future and that record is a dangling carrot for Wort.

"But forwards are only as good as those players who feed them the ball," added Diaper. "It's all about the team rather than one man and Worty knows this.

"That record is well within reach without a doubt. Obviously he's got a few already."

Wort himself is just looking to work hard and see what he has achieved come the end of the campaign.

"I've heard about the record but I'm going to try not to think about it, concentrate on each game as it comes and then try and get the goals and see at the end where I'm at," he said.

"We've got to focus on the league and how we perform. That is the key for me," said Wort.

Palmer: My debt to Hawks

FORMER Havant & Waterlooville striker Ollie Palmer promises he will run himself into the ground for his new club Mansfield Town.

The 21-year-old – joint golden boot winner with Salisbury's ex-Saint Jamie White in the Conference South last season – has got his big professional break with the League Two club, signing a two-year deal for the Stags.

Palmer, who finished 2012/13 with 25 goals, pledged: "I will run myself into the ground and will work really hard for the team.

"They have given me the opportunity to perform in the league, which is something I have always dreamt about."

Palmer began his career with Woking where he progressed from the youth ranks into the first team.

After joining Hawks in October 2011 he scored seven goals in five games and has had League scouts queuing up to watch him ever since.

LEAGUE MOVE: Ollie Palmer, right, in action for Havant.

Explaining Hawks' decision to sell Palmer for an undisclosed fee, Hawks boss Lee Bradbury said: "Mansfield came in for Ollie and, with various other clubs also knocking on the door, we felt it was the right deal for both Ollie and the club. It would have been unfair for us to stand in his way.

"As manager, it is bitter-sweet for me to lose Ollie from the team. To lose someone of Ollie's stature at this stage of the pre-season is difficult. The goals he scored and his general contribution to the team will be hard to replace.

"But at the same time I am very pleased for him. He is a great lad who has worked very hard for this opportunity.

"Ollie has always dreamed of being a professional footballer and will go to Mansfield to continue his rise up the football ladder.

"He goes with the club's full blessing and we hope it is the start of a long and distinguished career in the professional game."

Palmer spoke of his "great regret and sadness" at leaving Havant but said joining Mansfield was his opportunity to "realise a lifelong dream of playing in the Football League."

Thanking everyone at Westleigh Park for their support and belief, Palmer told club officials, players, staff and fans: "I hope you will continue to follow my progress.

"Shaun Gale, who first brought me to Havant, believed in me and my ability.

"I am also grateful to the staff behind the scenes who have supported me in reaching my dream.

"A special thanks to Lee Bradbury for helping me excel on the football pitch and for passing on his knowledge and experience. I hope I can take this with me to the Football League."

Non-league News

Signing to Crow about

BOURNEMOUTH Poppies have bolstered their defensive options for the new Sydenhams Premier Division season.

Manager Ken Vaughan, pictured below, has recaptured full-back Max Crow from reigning league champions Blackfield & Langley.

Crow, who played his part in Poppies' FA Vase exploits of 2012, left Victoria Park last summer to join the ambitious Watersiders.

But he has opted to return to Bournemouth after just one season with the Gang Warily outfit.

Vaughan said: "We are pleased to welcome Max back. "He is decent on the ball and has always added a bit of drive to every side I've seen him play in."

Poppies comfortably beat Ringwood 4-1 in the Sydenhams League Cup last Friday, but were thumped 6-0 in their Premier Division opener at Bemerton.

Brett's quick-fire treble

IT took fast-drawing Brett Denham, pictured below, just 25 minutes to fire the first hat-trick of the Sydenhams Division One season.

With Denham's teammate Grant Powell adding a fourth, Tadley Calleva were well in command at the halfway point of their opening fixture at relegated Hayling United.

James Milford added a fifth for the visitors in the second half with the Humbugs' Dan Sharpe replying either side to leave a final scoreline of 5-2.

Burridge's No1 priority

BURRIDGE AFC are looking for players in all positions – especially a goalkeeper – for the new Southampton Saturday Senior One campaign.

The club went all last season without a specialist 'keeper and are determined not to be in the same position this time round. Manager Colin Plumhoff is also looking for an assistant.

Plumhoff can be contacted on 07949 066946.

CALL NON-LEAGUE WRITER WENDY GEE ON 023 8042 4483

Non-league Football

Non-league News

Street swoop for duo

SUMMER signings Lewis Alderman and Nick Oliver have left Winchester City for Andover New Street.

Alderman spent the 2012/13 season with Stockbridge, while Oliver, pictured below, played 25 Wessex games for New Street last term.

Oliver was on target for City in their recent pre-season win over the 2004 FA Vase-winning side but, like Alderman, became surplus to requirements as new Winchester boss Graham Kemp and director of football Dave Malone assembled their pedigree squad.

New Street have also signed Jack Hutchings from Stockbridge while Ryan Lake has committed to Foxcotte Park for another season.

Therapist wanted

EASTLEIGH are looking for a matchday therapist to work with their Wyvern Combination squad.

The successful candidate must be available for home and away matches on mid-week evenings as well as the occasional Saturday.

The appointed person must have a recognised first aid qualification, including CPR, and is also required to have the FA intermediate certificate in treatment and management of injuries (full diploma preferred) and a basic massage qualification.

He/she must also agree to, and pass, an enhanced CRB check.

Weekly expenses are paid during the football season.

Email Dan Wright at *soccera-cademy@eastleighfc.com*.

SHERBS WANTS FEELGOOD FACTOR BACK AT TOTTON

AFTER too much talk and too little action at AFC Totton, manager Steve Riley and fans' favourite Nathaniel Sherborne have taken things into their own hands.

With the club deep in financial trouble, Riley held a successful 1970s/80s disco night last month to start chipping away at the Stags' crippling debts.

And tomorrow (noon) striker Sherborne has organised a big reunion match, pitting the 2007 FA Vase final side against an AFC Totton Guest XI, ***writes WENDY GEE***.

Following several failed attempts by outside parties to take over the debt-ridden Southern Premier outfit during the summer, Totton eventually opted to remain a members' club.

But what saddens Sherborne is that while so many empty promises were being made behind the scenes, fund-raising opportunities were passing the club by and the team was steadily falling apart.

"There have been a lot of false dawns, but I want tomorrow to be all about the positive side of AFC Totton," he said.

"We want to generate the good feeling of that FA Vase final day when around 20,000 people followed the club to Wembley.

"Pretty much every player who featured that day has said he can make it tomorrow with the exception of Brunnschy (goalkeeper Iain Brunnschweiler) who's with the England cricket team.

"Kev Reacord is injured, so we decided the best way he could get involved would be to manage the side and he'll be assisted by Gos (Mike Gosney) whose club Gosport Borough won't let him play so close to the start of the Conference South season.

"Steve Riley's going to manage the Guest XI made up of lads like Ryan Scott and Nathan Jack who've been a big part of the club down the years.

BLUE AND WHITE ARMY: AFC Totton fans at Wembley for the 2007 FA Vase final.

"It'll be great catching up with everyone.

"We're making it a family fun day with football coaching for kids on the artificial pitch, a half-time penalty shoot-out, bouncy castle, hog roast etc. I just hope the weather holds out.

"The bar will be open and we'll have the Community Shield match on TV.

"We've got some great raffle prizes too. I work for P&O cruises and we've got lunch and a tour on board a P&O cruise ship, plus some signed shirts from AFC Bournemouth and, hopefully, Southampton."

Expected to feature for Kev Reacord's FA Vase final squad are Matt Troon, Wembley goalscorer Danny Potter, Lee Thorne, Gareth Byres, James Roden, Jamie Austen, Lee Stevens, Mark Osman, Joe McCormack, Ousame Drame, Rich Zammit, Ross Bottomley, Richard Gregory and Floyd Hamodu.

Among the Guest XI are Sherborne, Scott, Jack, Stefan Brown, Ryan Hill, Charlie Knight, Ian Richardson and Dave Allen – and, for one lucky fan, there will be the chance to feature in Riley's invitational side. The club are auctioning a place in the team with bids currently standing at £120.

After the main match Pace under-12s will play Whiteley under-12s and then it will be straight into the bar for the Community Shield game, an auction and a raffle.

Admission is £5 adults, £1 under-16s. Turnstiles open at 10.30am.

Stoneham coup

AFC STONEHAM have pulled off a double coup ahead of the new Puma Engineering Hampshire Premier League season.

With several of last season's players following former assistant boss Terry Chapman to Stockbridge, manager Adam Pullinger and his right-hand man Wayne Simpson have wasted no time rebuilding the team.

Topping the list of summer arrivals are defender Phil Ward and wideman Steve Jenkin, who have vast amounts of Sydenhams Premier know-how behind them with Totton & Eling and will add experience to an otherwise young team.

Stoneham, who beat Brockenhurst in the Southampton Senior Cup final at St Mary's in April, have had a productive pre-season.

Pullinger and Simpson have put the players through some intense training sessions and a few friendly games.

They narrowly lost 4-3 to Fareham Town, but have beaten Amesbury, Lyndhurst and Folland Sports.

Several youth players who featured regularly for the reserves last season have now risen to the challenge of first-team football and have already made an impact – notably Lewis Scorey, who has banged in three goals against Wessex League opposition.

With the average age of the Stoneham side approximately 21, the club emphasis has shifted from being a 'one season team' to building a side they can take forward over the next few years.

The Eastleigh-based club pride themselves on a great atmosphere and are working on promoting the AFC Stoneham 'brand.'

Chairman Richard Reeves announced at the recent presentation evening that Stoneham have signed a new ten-year lease at the Pirelli Sports Ground, meaning they are now in a position to apply for grants to further upgrade the ground and facilities.

Stoneham were due to kick off the new Hampshire Premier League campaign at Baffins Milton Rovers today.

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Southern Daily Echo

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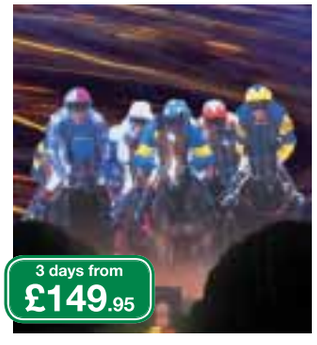

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Non-league Football

Kemp's men lay down early marker

WINCHESTER City flexed their Sydenhams Premier muscles by slamming seven past Fawley AFC on the Waterside on Wednesday.

Russell Cook, pictured left, led the charge with a hat-trick and, had it not been for some outstanding goalkeeping from the Oilers' Joe Prodomo, City could have had more.

Prodomo previously played for Graham Kemp at Christchurch and the City boss admitted: "It's no secret that I tried to sign him for Winchester, but he stayed loyal to Fawley.

"He was their best player by a mile tonight. No disrespect, but if it hadn't been for him we'd probably have got five or six more."

City were three to the good at half-time with Cook striking twice and Dan Thompson once.

Ben Osborne made it 4-0 before Cook completed his hat-trick.

Tom Price netted number six and ex-AFC Totton and Sholing midfielder Jamie Austen came off the bench to head the seventh.

"There was a little bit of frustration from fans after Saturday's 0-0 draw with Moneyfields because expectation was so high, although personally I thought it was a good performance," said Kemp.

"We had a little tweak of formation and got off to a bright start and, once the first goal had gone in, we grew in stature.

"Although he didn't score, (former Eastleigh forward) Chris Flood was outstanding. His attitude's been spot on.

"Chris arrived late and that's the reason he's not playing higher. He can't get out of work in time.

"We were worthy winners at Fawley. We're still a team in progress, but if we can hang on in there for the first ten games, we'll see where we can go after that."

Winchester added a new player to the ranks before the game, but attacking midfielder/striker Matt Gray was not signed on in time to feature.

Having been with Saints as a youngster, Gray spent three years with Conference South club Eastleigh where he was in the Spitfires' Suburban League side.

One blow for Winchester this week was losing defender/midfielder Lloyd Webber to a broken wrist.

The season was just five minutes old when Webber – one of the heroes of City's 2004 FA Vase-winning triumph – put his hand down to break his fall after being challenged by Moneyfields' Steve Hutchings.

Webber, who broke his wrist in two places, underwent surgery on Wednesday, but manager Kemp is hopeful he won't be sidelined for too long.

"I'm told all went well with operation and he'll soon be on the mend," said the boss. "Lloyd hopes to be back in training in two to three weeks."

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

City in discussions over new stand and artificial pitch

Wendy Gee
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NON-LEAGUE REPORTER

WINCHESTER City are in negotiations with the local council about plans to build a new stand and install an artificial pitch at the Denplan City Ground.

The go-ahead Sydenhams Premier Division club have already had what chairman Paul Murray, pictured below, describes as "three interesting discussions" with Winchester City Council and they intend to talk again in the near future.

The plans would see the existing stand replaced by a new one running the length of the pitch with changing rooms incorporated.

But it's the prospect of an artificial pitch that really excites former Eastleigh chairman Murray – not least because of the money-making potential it would hold.

"Having an artificial pitch is quite interesting because it opens up the possibility of a good number of games being played here each week," he said.

"Rather than having just the two games a week on a grass pitch, we would have a decent pitch available for ourselves, other clubs in the area and community bodies such as the university, the hospital, colleges, schools – plus vets and ladies' teams.

"Non-League clubs need to reassess their business model because, as recent history shows in this area and elsewhere, clubs are having problems with the current way they are run.

"If there is wider use of the pitch and facilities, the income is infinitely greater.

"Using the experience Dave (director of football Dave Malone) and I have had in non-League football, we've come up with a vision of how the club could work, co-operating with the local council on the provision of football in this area.

"Nothing's been confirmed yet, but we've been having discussions and we're optimistic that something positive will come out of it.

"I should imagine the earliest it could happen would be the end of the 2014/15 season subject to funding, grants and so on. It's a medium-term project."

Given that Murray's previous club Eastleigh are firmly established in the Conference South, it's tempting to wonder just why he got involved with a club having to rebuild in the Wessex ranks after a disastrous Southern League season.

The simple answer is that he is intrigued by Winchester's potential as a community club.

"That's why I'm here," he said. "I find it very exciting.

"It's a nice, good-sized ground in central Winchester and if we can create a strong community club supporting a reasonable level of football, it will be good for us and the city."

Winchester's pitch has been improved beyond recognition and 50 tons of asphalt has been put down as hard standing.

In fact the whole ground had been spruced up ready for last Saturday's opening league fixture against Moneyfields and, with the sun shining, Abbotts Barton was a pleasant place to be.

The gate of 170 was an eye-opener too. It was a marked improvement on City's average 97 attendance in the Southern League last term, suggesting many fans that followed City during their FA Vase/Wessex League-winning hey-day of the mid 2000s are steadily drifting back.

"To have 170 here was fantastic, especially in early August for the first game of the season when the sun's out and people have got other things to do," said Murray.

"It indicates the latent support in this area and shows that a lot of the old fans are coming back."

LOCKED IN COMBAT: Action from Winchester City's (red/black) opening Sydenhams Wessex Premier game against Moneyfields.

WINCHESTER City are staging a 'Last Night of The Proms', featuring the band of The Hampshire Constabulary, at Winchester Guildhall on Saturday, October 19.

The evening (7.30pm for 8pm start) includes a three-course meal and music from Martin Murphy as Michael Buble. There will be a DJ until 1am.

Tickets are £49.50 per head and the dress code is red, white and blue.

All proceeds go to Winchester City FC.

Order tickets from chairman Paul Murray at *Paultmurray@btconnect.com*.

Non-league News

Bray in Cowes switch

EXPERIENCED former Winchester City and Blackfield & Langley goalkeeper Jamie Bray has put pen to paper for East Cowes Vics for the new season.

The Islanders have also raided neighbours Cowes Sports for Canadian centre-back Patrick Wilson, who had trials with Winchester and Havant & Waterlooville last summer.

Vics started the Sydenhams One season on a winning note last Saturday, beating Fleet Spurs 2-1 through a Chris Elliott penalty and Josh Appell.

Bash seal Odam deal

BASHLEY have completed the signing of lively frontrunner Jack Odam, pictured below, following an impressive pre-season by the former AFC Totton youngster.

Bash co-manager Stewart Kearn said: "Jack is a good, lively player who has worked very hard to earn his place in the squad.

"He is a refreshing player who has no fear and plenty of pace.

"We're confident he can learn a lot from playing alongside Tim Sills while giving the team something a little bit different."

Odam was selected for the English Schools' FA under-18 side while at Barton Peveril College last season and was just 16 when he qualified for the under-19 elite squad run by British Colleges Sport and the FA.

Prior to attending Barton Peveril, he was a student at Mountbatten School in Romsey.

Kearn also confirmed he was "monitoring the progress" of Verwood Town's Jack Satterley, another striker currently on trial at Bashley Road.

Referees' meeting

EASTLEIGH Referees' Society are holding their first monthly meeting of the new season on Monday (August 12) with Dan Berry as guest speaker.

Kick-off is 7.30pm at Chandler's Ford Central Club, Winchester Road, Eastleigh, SO53 2FZ.

All are welcome to attend.

Non-league Football

Gos help out neighbours

CONFERENCE South new boys Gosport Borough have allowed Bradey Norton and Jonny Brogden to sign dual registration forms for Wessex neighbours AFC Portchester and Fareham Town respectively.

Midfielder Norton is still recovering from an ankle injury that sidelined him towards the end of last season, while Brogden has featured in the club's pre-season campaign after being released from fellow Skrill South side Chelmsford City.

A tall, quick, left-sided defender, Brogden began his career with QPR youth before moving to Aldershot and Woking.

He took three years out of football to complete his university degree before registering with Chelmsford at the start of last season.

"At this stage in their development it is good that they can go and get 90 minutes of football each week, which they might not have got here," said manager Alex Pike, pictured below. "It works well for us though because we can monitor their progress and if we need them they are available."

Gosport's otherwise excellent pre-season took a turn for the worse on Monday when they suffered their first loss.

After banging in 14 goals in a week to extend their unbeaten summer run to seven games, they were jolted by a disappointing 1-0 home defeat by south coast neighbours Bognor Regis Town.

With their regular goalkeepers unavailable, Bognor were forced to borrow Gosport's former AFC Totton No1 Gareth Barfoot, giving Pike the chance to see both his 'keepers in 90 minutes of action.

Gosport had their chances to beat Barfoot, but Tom Dunford, Rory Williams and Sammy Igoe were all off target in the first half.

Former Follands winger Williams then saw a fierce 57th-minute effort cannon off the woodwork before, following a flurry of substitutes, Bognor seized the lead.

Arron Hopkinson drove in from the right and beat Nathan Ashmore at his near post.

It had all been so different at Frome Town last Saturday where Gosport cruised to a handsome 5-0 victory.

Ex-Saint Dunford put Borough ahead before Justin Bennett netted from the spot following a foul on ex-AFC Totton winger Mike Gosney.

Skipper Lee Molyneaux added a third just after the hour and then former Eastleigh hero Andy Forbes got in on the act, curling a 25-yard beauty past goalkeeper Darren Chitty.

An Adam Wilde free kick finished the job for Borough.Gosport get their first taste of Skrill Conference South action at home to last season's beaten play-off finalists Dover Athletic next Saturday (August 17) and Pike believes the Bognor defeat will keep their feet on the ground.

"Expectations were getting high and people were getting carried away and the Bognor game was a reality check," he said.

"We made one mistake and the ball ended up in our net. We didn't create enough up front."

New in at Dover is creative former Barnet and Eastleigh midfielder Ashley Carew.

FOUNDATIONS IN PLACE FOR PORTCHESTER TO THRIVE

Wendy Gee
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NON-LEAGUE REPORTER

AFC PORTCHESTER have ambitions to be one of the most progressive clubs in the Sydenhams Premier Division.

But director of football Mick Jenkins is happy to make it a marathon not a sprint.

"We're doing things slowly but surely," explained the former Havant & Waterlooville and Dorchester boss.

"The pitch has been heavily invested in over the summer, we've got new changing rooms and a new stand and clubhouse extension with hospitality lounge, and we've got a thriving youth set-up.

"We're building from the bottom up, making sure we get the facilities and the infrastructure right and trying to avoid the 'boom and bust' scenario.

"Portchester are doing it the right way, building slowly, developing the ground and getting the gradings as and when we are ready to move on.

"Our gates are pretty healthy and, although we don't have a major benefactor, we've got quite a few sponsors who have stepped in to help over the summer, which is great news.

"Now that local companies are coming forward, we can build on that and make Portchester a stronger club."

Such is the expertise of the Wicor Rec management team that Jenkins can busy himself with player recruitment, commercial activities – and even tending the pitch – safe in the knowledge that the playing side is in excellent hands.

Ex-Arsenal winger and Chelsea caretaker boss Graham Rix is staying on as head coach, working side by side with seasoned Wessex manager/coach Louis Bell.

"We're delighted to have kept Graham at the club," said Jenkins.

"He likes what's happening here and the project we're doing.

"He's a fantastic coach and when you work with him you can see exactly why he's worked for Chelsea and the Glenn Hoddle Academy and played 400-plus games for Arsenal.

"It's frightening at this level of football to attract a man of that calibre!

"We've got Louis (Bell) there coaching side by side with Graham and we all work well together as a team off the pitch."

Although Portchester have lost players this summer – notably George Way and Blu Boam to Bemerton – they have brought in several new faces.

"We've got Lewis Stockford who went on a pre-season tour as a Portsmouth player and was with Bognor Regis last year," said Jenkins.

"We've also got Joe Bye (from Folland Sports). Left-sided players are hard to come by and Joe's a lad I've admired for a long time. He'll bring leadership to the side.

"Jack Salter-Vaile's also come to us having been among the goals at Hayling last year and we've brought in midfielder/striker Nathan Kirby from Gosport Borough.

"Simon Woods is back with us from Bognor. He gave it a go down there in the Ryman Premier, but he's got work commitments and was happy to rejoin us. And we're happy to have Simon back because he's a 20-plus goal-a-season man."

With talented former Follands goalkeeper Jon Webb currently out with a knee problem, Portchester have signed ex-Aldershot, Blackfield and Hayling stopper Luke Hutchings.

The Wicor Rec club have had an indifferent start to the new season.

Having lost to two Ryan Long goals at Folland Sports in the League Cup last Friday, they opened their Premier Division campaign with a 2-2 home draw against Verwood Town in midweek.

After falling behind to a Ben Kelly header, Portchester hit back to lead 2-1 through Stockford and Kirby. But, with time running out, Dean Evans rescued the Potters a point.

It was a welcome result for Verwood who, like Portchester, had been dumped out of the League Cup. Jordan Browne bagged both Cowes Sports goals as the Sydenhams One side triumphed 2-0 at Potterne Park.

ON TARGET: Christchurch's Marc Fairbrother (blue strip).

Dream start for Cuffie

MICHAEL Cuffie couldn't have asked for a more promising start as Christchurch manager.

Cuffie, who took over the Priory reins following Graham Kemp's move to Winchester City, kicked off with a 4-2 extra-time Sydenhams Cup win at Fawley AFC.

Substitute Jack Hoey's strike sent the tie into extra time at 1-1 before Gareth Barnes' double and Mark Smith's penalty clinched it for the visitors.

"To be honest, we were exceptional," said Cuffie. "We were so on top in the first 45 minutes that we should have been four or five goals up.

"We were much the better side, but Fawley were defending really well and we said at half-time to watch out for the sucker punch.

"After going behind, it could have got a bit anxious but, to be fair, the lads did really well, stuck to the task and got back in the game.

"We have had a very good pre-season and started well.

"If we can continue that, we're going to surprise a few people."

Christchurch kept up the good work on Wednesday, beating newly-promoted Whitchurch United 3-1 in their Sydnehams Premier opener at Hurn Bridge.

Barnes helped himself to another brace backed by one from Marc Fairbrother. Shane Lock scored for Whitchurch.

LOCAL AND NATIONAL FOOTBALL FIXTURES FOR THE WEEK AHEAD

Monday, August 12
BARCLAYS U21 PREMIER LEAGUE
Liverpool U21 v SAINTS U21 (2pm).

Tuesday, August 13
SKRILL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE
Premier Division: Aldershot v Dartford, Alfreton Town v Kidderminster, Braintree Town v Woking, Chester FC v Hereford, FC Halifax v Wrexham, Gateshead v Grimsby, Hyde v Southport, Lincoln City v Macclesfield, Luton v Salisbury, Nuneaton v Forest Green, Tamworth v Barnet.
SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE
Premier Division: AFC Portchester v Newport IoW (7.30), Bemerton HH v Horndean, Blackfield & Langley v Folland Sports (7.30), Christchurch v Winchester City, Downton v Lymington Town, Moneyfields v Bournemouth Poppies, Sholing v Alresford, Totton & Eling v Fareham, Whitchurch v Romsey.
PUMA ENGINEERING HPL
Premier Division: AFC Stoneham v Bournemouth Sports, Bishops Waltham v Otterbourne, Colden Common v AFC Aldermaston, Fleetlands v Baffins Milton Rovers, Headley Utd v Liss, Liphook v Clanfield, Paulsgrove v Locks Heath, QK Southampton v Hedge End Rangers.

Wednesday, August 14
INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLIES (selected)
England v Scotland (8pm), Japan v Uruguay, Liechtenstein v Croatia, Wales v Rep of Ireland.
SKRILL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE
Premier Division: Welling v Cambridge Utd.
SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE
Premier Division: Brockenhurst v Verwood, Fawley AFC v Hamworthy Utd.
PUMA ENGINEERING HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE
Premier Division: Winchester Castle v Overton Utd.

Friday, August 16
SKY BET FOOTBALL LEAGUE
Championship: Doncaster v Blackburn.
BARCLAYS U21 PREMIER LEAGUE
SAINTS U21 v Chelsea U21 (7.30pm).
FA CUP
Extra preliminary round: Alresford Town v Winchester City, Christchurch v Sherborne Town.

Saturday, August 17
(FL games 3pm ko unless stated)
BARCLAYS PREMIER LEAGUE
Arsenal v Aston Villa, Liverpool v Stoke (12.45), Norwich v Everton, Sunderland v Fulham, Swansea v Man United (5.30pm, West Brom v SAINTS, West Ham Utd v Cardiff.
SKY BET FOOTBALL LEAGUE
Championship: Barnsley v Charlton, Birmingham v Brighton, Bournemouth v Wigan, Burnley v Yeovil, Derby v Leicester, Leeds v Sheff Wed (12.15), Middlesbrough v Blackpool, Millwall v Huddersfield, Nottm Forest v Bolton, QPR v Ipswich, Reading v Watford.
League 1: Bristol City v Wolverhampton, Carlisle v Coventry, Crawley Town v Rotherham, Crewe v Tranmere, Gillingham v Brentford, Peterborough v Oldham, Port Vale v Bradford, Preston v Milton Keynes Dons, Sheff Utd v Colchester, Shrewsbury v Swindon, Stevenage v Leyton Orient, Walsall v Notts County.
League 2: Bury v Accrington Stanley, Cheltenham v Plymouth, Exeter v AFC Wimbledon, Fleetwood Town v Burton Albion, Newport County v Bristol Rovers, Portsmouth v Morecambe, Rochdale v Chesterfield, Scunthorpe v Dag & Red, Southend v Northampton, Torquay v Oxford Utd, Wycombe v Mansfield, York v Hartlepool.
BARCLAYS U18 PREMIER LEAGUE
SAINTS U18 v Everton U18 (11am).
SKRILL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE
Premier Division: Aldershot v Cambridge Utd, Alfreton Town v Salisbury, Braintree Town v Kidderminster, Chester FC v Woking, FC Halifax v Dartford, Gateshead v Barnet, Hyde v Hereford, Lincoln City v Forest Green, Luton v Macclesfield, Nuneaton v Southport, Tamworth v Wrexham, Welling v Grimsby.
South: Bishops Stortford v Bath City, Concord Rangers v Basingstoke, Eastleigh v Sutton, Ebbsfleet v Havant & Waterlooville, Farnborough v Chelmsford, Gosport Borough v Dover, Hayes & Yeading v Bromley, Staines v Dorchester, Tonbridge Angels v Boreham Wood, Weston-super-Mare v Eastbourne Borough, Whitehawk v Maidenhead.
CALOR SOUTHERN LEAGUE
Premier Division: AFC Totton v Stourbridge, Banbury v Chippenham, Biggleswade v Bashley, Chesham v Bideford, Corby v Burnham, Frome v Cambridge City, Hitchin v Hemel Hempstead, Hungerford v Hinckley, Poole Town v St Albans, Redditch v Arlesey, St Neots v Weymouth, Truro v Bedford.
Division One South & West: Bridgwater v Bishops Cleeve, Cinderford v Fleet, Evesham v Taunton, Godalming v Paulton, Mangotsfield v Guildford, North Leigh v Merthyr Town, Shortwood v Didcot, Swindon Supermarine v Clevedon, Thatcham v Stratford, Tiverton v Cirencester, Yate v Wimborne.
FA CUP
Extra preliminary round: Bemerton HH v Fareham Town, Bitton v Pewsey Vale, Bournemouth Poppies v Highworth Town, Cowes Sports v Fawley AFC, Downton v Sholing, Hallen v Whitchurch, East Cowes Vics v Lymington Town, Horndean v Calne Town, Melksham Town v Hamworthy Utd, Moneyfields v Cadbury Heath, Newport IoW v Verwood, Petersfield v Blackfield & Langley, Romsey Town v Brockenhurst, Tadley Calleva v Ascot Utd, Team Solent v AFC Portchester, Winterbourne Utd v Folland Sports, Wootton Bassett v Totton & Eling,
SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE
Division One: Andover Town v Hythe & Dibden, New Milton v Andover New Street, Stockbridge v US Portsmouth.
PUMA ENGINEERING HPL
Premier Division: AFC Aldermaston v Locks Heath, AFC Stoneham v Fleetlands, Baffins Milton Rovers v Colden Common, Bishops Waltham v Liphook, Bournemouth Sports v Paulsgrove, Clanfield v Overton, Hedge End Rangers v Winchester Castle, Otterbourne v Liss, QK Southampton v Headley Utd.

MORE NON-LEAGUE COVERAGE IN MONDAY'S DAILY ECHO

Non-league Football

City move gets Wilson buzzing

PERMANENT DEAL: Glenn Wilson.

GLENN Wilson is now a permanent fixture at Salisbury City having penned a one-year deal with the Conference National new boys.

Wilson joined the Whites on loan from Gateshead last January and boosted their promotion campaign from the Conference South.

The defender spent the early part of pre-season with Farnborough and Aldershot Town, but is now fully committed to Mikey Harris's side.

"Glenn is a great character, who is a leader on and off the pitch," said new boss Harris, whose team were due to kick off the 2013/14 campaign at home to Tamworth today.

"He is a solid performer and his voice and experience will benefit the younger members of the squad.

"He has played a lot of games at this level and I'm looking forward to working with him again."

Wilson, formerly of Rushden & Diamonds and Crawley Town, is relishing the prospect of another season in non-League's top flight.

"I'm buzzing to be back with the lads and looking forward to working under the new, exciting management team," said the 27-year-old Londoner.

New in at Old Sarum is 22-year-old Cameroonian defender/midfielder Clovis Kamdjo.

Having started out as a youth at Reading, Kamdjo has spent the last four years at Edgar Davids' Barnet, making more than 100 appearances in League Two.

"Clovis has looked very good in pre-season matches and I think he will become a top-class player," said Harris.

Also joining the Whites is 16-year-old shot-stopper Monty George, who will provide cover for first-choice 'keeper Will Puddy.

STAYING PUT: Downton's Declan McGregor, left.

Softley puts faith in youth

DOWNTON will put their faith in youth as they seek to build on two impressive top-eight finishes in the Sydenhams Premier League.

Nic Turpin, Robins' top scorer last season with 21 goals, has gone to Winchester City along with defender Matt Scott, while experienced duo Vinnie Rusher and Matt Holmes have joined neighbours Bemerton Heath Harlequins.

Manager Jeff Softley has been busy bringing in new players though, snapping up the top scorers from two clubs.

Callum Coker hit 24 for Petersfield in Division One, while Matt Austin grabbed eight for Romsey Town.

Another forward, Danny Sullivan, has returned to Wick Lane, while Tom Plant has climbed aboard from Amesbury. Joshua Cooper, Marcus Savage and William Savage have also signed.

Among those staying on from last season are ex-Salisbury City striker Declan McGregor, goalkeeper Charles Aldridge, Luke Charity, Harvey Coker, Danny Finnigan and Brandon Mundy, who trialled at Salisbury in pre-season.

"We have a new side this year with an average age of 22," said Softley.

"The last two seasons have been the best any Downton side has achieved.

"My aim is to finish as high as we can with this new side."

HARRIS I'LL GIVE YOUNG STARS A CHANCE TO SHINE

MIKEY HARRIS

SALISBURY City's new management team are optimistic about rising young stars progressing through the Old Sarum ranks.

The club's link-up with Sarum Academy and its new building, which is set to open next month, will provide students, aged 16-19, with the opportunity to take a football studies course while playing for the Whites.

Boss Mikey Harris says the new structure will provide budding stars with a fantastic opportunity to play for his Skrill Conference Premier newcomers in the future.

"There are some good, young players in Salisbury and coming here provides them with a chance of playing a decent standard of football," said the 28-year-old.

"In the past players from this area have gone to academies at Southampton, Portsmouth and AFC Bournemouth, but I think we can bring youngsters through the ranks to end up in the first team.

"We've got a fantastic youth set-up here which is developing all the time."

Harris, who took over the managerial reins from Darrell Clarke during the summer, is still new to the job, but said: "Once I've settled down a little, I would like to get my teeth into that (youth production) and put my stamp on it.

"We've got a good link-up with Sarum Academy and we have plenty of good players."

Salisbury's new player/assistant manager Warren Feeney shares Harris's belief that youngsters are integral to the Wiltshire club's future.

"Sometimes there is not a lot of ambition in kids, especially ones who have come out of big academies," said the Northern Ireland international.

"I've been brought up cleaning toilets, my room, but nowadays boys don't have to do anything like that.

"Thankfully the youngsters in Salisbury are not like that as they enjoy coming in every day and working hard for each other."

Salisbury's Academy side will play in the Under-19 Youth Conference, the South West Counties and the FA Youth Cup. There will also be opportunities to train with the first team.

To find out more visit the Academy page on the club website or contact Chris Taylor, Academy development manager, on 01722 776655 or at *chris.taylor@salisburycity-fc.co.uk*.

Jason raises eyebrows ...

BASINGSTOKE Town boss Jason Bristow admits there were "a few raised eyebrows" when he and assistant Michael Gilkes told the squad how they want them to play this season.

The Camrose outfit have been working hard on their passing this summer as they look to play out from the back – something not generally done in the Skrill Conference South.

"We are trying to play a bit differently," Bristow explained. "We want to be in control of the ball when we go over the halfway line.

"When we told the players what we wanted to do there were a few raised eyebrows, but they have all bought into it.

"We are good to watch at times, but there are going to be mistakes as we get used to it.

"We just need to add the finishing touches.

"We will not be looking to play like that in every game, but we have got to have options."

The pros and cons of Basingstoke's new passing style were evident in last Saturday's 2-0 friendly defeat at Ryman Premier outfit Met Police.

Stoke dominated the first hour, keeping possession well, but Neil Barrett's misplaced pass allowed Police striker Tobi Alabi to nip through and score.

And, although they continued to make chances, Town looked vulnerable to the counter-attack and Lee Carey made them pay with a breakaway second on 70 minutes.

Bristow said: "We dominated for long periods and our approach play was good.

"We do not want to lose any game, but there were plenty of positives for us to take away."

The same couldn't be said on Tuesday, however, when Town were held 2-2 at Southern Premier new boys Hungerford Town.

They fell behind after former AFC Totton man Nathan Campbell had been caught in possession. Ex-Saint Jordace Holder-Spooner levelled and Town took the lead on 67 minutes when Andrew Jenkinson slotted home after great work by Manny Williams.

But Hungerford equalised with the last kick of the game – a magnificent curling effort into the top corner.

After the game Jenkinson – a product of Reading's youth system – signed on a non-contract basis.

That, though, was the highlight of a concerning night for Bristow, whose side kick off their Skrill South campaign away at promoted Concord Rangers next Saturday (August 17) before facing Hampshire rivals Gosport Borough (August 20) and Eastleigh (August 24) at home.

"We are not where we want to be at the moment," he confessed after the Hungerford game. "There were a lot of positives on Saturday, but tonight we took a step backwards.

"The players have to decide whether they want to be in the starting line-up for the first game and put themselves in the shop window (at Poole Town today)."

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10am - 2pm

Wickham Centre, Mill Lane, Wickham, PO17 5AL
Tuesday 20th August 2013
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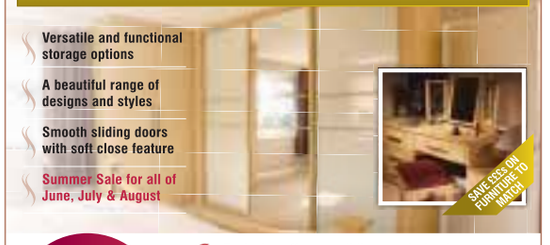

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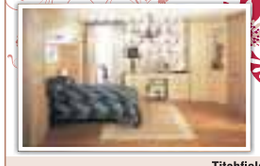

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BARCLAYS

PREMIER LEAGUE

2013-2014

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HOST OF NEW MANAGERS OUT TO MAKE THEIR MARK

BARCLAYS PREMIER LEAGUE

RECORDS

The Premier League was founded as the top tier of English football at the start of the 1992-93 season. Cardiff City will become the 46th and most recent club to join the elite this season.

WINS/LOSSES

Most titles:
13 – Manchester United

Most wins in a season (38 games):
29 – Chelsea (twice)

Fewest wins in a season:
1 – Derby County

Most home wins in a season (19 games):
18 – Chelsea, Manchester United and Manchester City

Fewest home wins in a season (19 games):
1 – Sunderland and Derby County

Most away wins in a season (19 games):
15 – Chelsea

Fewest away wins in a season (19/21 games)
0 – Leeds United, Coventry City, Wolves, Norwich City, Derby County and Hull City

Most consecutive wins:
14 – Arsenal

Most losses in a season (38 or 42 games):
29 – Ipswich Town, Sunderland and Derby County

Fewest losses in a season (38 games):
0 – Arsenal

GOALS

Most goals in a season:
103 – Chelsea

Fewest goals in a season:
20 – Derby County

Most goals conceded in a season (42 games):
100 – Swindon Town

Most goals conceded in a season (38 games):
89 – Derby County

Most goals scored at home in a season:
68 – Chelsea

Most goals scored away in a season:
47 – Manchester United

Most clean sheets in a season:
25 – Chelsea

Most Premier League goals:
260 – Alan Shearer

Most goals at any one club:
175 – Thierry Henry (Arsenal)

ATTENDANCES

Highest attendance, single game:
76,398 – Manchester United v Blackburn Rovers (March 31, 2007)

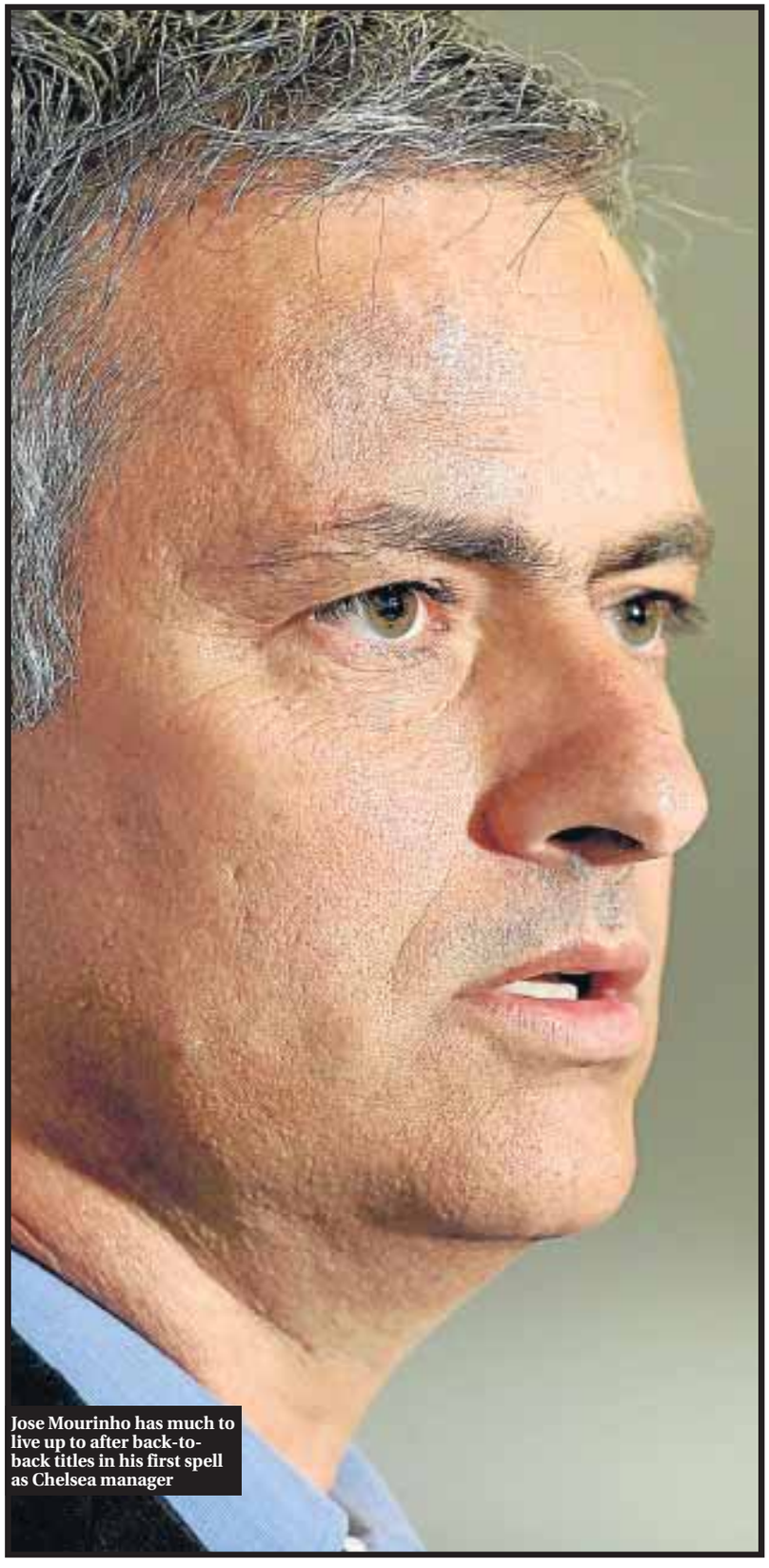
Lowest attendance, single game:
3,039 – Wimbledon v Everton (January 26, 1993)

AWARDS

Most Premier League winner's medals:
13 – Ryan Giggs (Manchester United)

Winner of the Premier League Player of the Month Award:
5 – Steven Gerrard, Wayne Rooney and Robin van Persie

New faces, same



Jose Mourinho has much to live up to after back-to-back titles in his first spell as Chelsea manager

City buy new galaxy of stars, Chelsea have Jose back, but all the pressure is on Moyes

By Frank Malley

CHANGE is inevitable in football, but rarely does it come as collectively or with such intrigue as the coming Premier League season.

Rarely, too, does it throw up such fascinating questions. How will David Moyes cope with stepping into the shoes of Sir Alex Ferguson at Manchester United, whose 13 Premier League titles make him undeniably the greatest British manager of all time?

Can Manuel Pellegrini take Manchester City to the next level in their development following the sacking of Roberto Mancini, who won one Premier League title but failed to prove he had the imagination to match the wealth of City's billionaire owners?

Will Jose Mourinho, football's most charismatic character, dazzle the Premier League on his return to Chelsea in the manner he did when he won back-to-back titles at Stamford Bridge?

All three of England's strongest and wealthiest clubs have new managers, and all three will be desperate to hit the ground running.

No question who is under most pressure. It has to be Moyes. The former Everton boss spent a decade at Goodison Park working on a shoestring, looking for bargains, getting extraordinary results out of ordinary players while under no expectations.

> "The problem with City is that there have been no real roots put down since owner Sheikh Mansour took over. It has been a case of throwing money and individuals, often brilliant players, together without a clear long-term strategy"

Now he is expected to win the League. He is expected to win the Champions League. Let us be honest, he is expected by many to win every match United play.

That is serious pressure and, even though he was chosen because he has a temperament not dissimilar from the strict, no-nonsense Ferguson, it remains to be seen whether he possesses the same uncanny knack of getting it right when it comes to selection, substitutions and tactics.

Much also depends on what happens before the transfer window shuts and whether the disgruntled Wayne Rooney is an asset or a liability if he remains at Old Trafford next season.

On balance, however, Moyes appears a good choice, and United's squad, with Robin van Persie guaranteeing goals, will ensure they produce a robust defence of their title.

City have lost Carlos Tevez but they have reinforced with players such as Fernandinho, Jesus Navas, Alvaro Negredo and Stevan Jovetic and no-one could accuse Chilean Pellegrini of not having experience. City are the 12th club he has managed in a career which has taken him to Villarreal, Real Madrid and Malaga and now the Etihad Stadium. The problem with City is that there have been no real roots put down since owner Sheikh Mansour took over. It has been a case of throwing money and individuals, often brilliant players, together without a clear long-term strategy. It could gel under Pellegrini, but it is doubtful it will do so instantly.

Which brings us to Mourinho and the reason the coming season is bound to be packed with colour and controversy. They say you should never go back in football, and times are different from when Mourinho utilised the English core of Frank Lampard, John Terry and Ashley Cole as the steely framework of his first

old contenders

New Manchester City manager Manuel Pellegrini has plenty of firepower in the shape of new signings (opposite, from top), Fernandinho, Jesus Navas, Alvaro Negredo and Stevan Jovetic, while, across town, David Moyes (below) faces the biggest task of all

Frank Malley's crystal ball

Premier League:	Chelsea
Runners-up:	Manchester United
FA Cup:	Manchester City
League Cup:	Liverpool
Relegated:	Hull City, Crystal Palace, Norwich
Champions League:	Bayern Munich

reign at Stamford Bridge. Those characters remain, but no longer are they as youthful and vibrant.

Mourinho, however, is the master of man-management. His genius is forging committed individuals into a team which will give every last drop of sweat and blood in the cause. Everything hinges on what he decides to do with striker Fernando Torres, and whether he buys into the talented but lightweight midfield triangle of Juan Mata, Oscar and Eden Hazard or reverts to his more instinctive feel for something more physically powerful.

But the fact is that Chelsea have a strong squad with a pleasing balance of youth and experience, plus an ingenious manager. That sounds like title-winning material, so do not be surprised if Mourinho is picking up the trophy for a third time come May.

The beauty, however, is that while the title might ultimately prove to be a three-horse race, the competition provided by the also-rans for the Champions League spots threatens to be keener than ever.

Liverpool bought early and well and Luis Alberto, Iago Aspas, Simon Mignolet and Kolo Toure should provide solidity for a team which was beginning to show signs of flourishing towards the end of last season.

Tottenham, too, will be up there, so long as the irrepressible Gareth Bale is not lured away by a bid the board cannot refuse, while Arsenal remain competitive but far from winners until manager Arsene Wenger spends the £100million he is said to have at his disposal on a world-class defender, a surging midfielder and a game-breaking striker.

It will be interesting to see whether new manager Roberto Martinez sinks or swims at Everton, although signing Arouna Kone, Joel Robles and Antolin Alcaraz from former club, relegated Wigan, is not likely to flood the Evertonian hearts with optimism.

Inevitably, the promoted clubs will struggle. There is such a gulf these days between the Championship and the moneybags Premier League, with its £5.5billion three-year television deal, that survival in the first year is quite a feat.

Cardiff could have enough to stay up and their local derby with Swansea should be one of the new season's treats.

It is likely to be one long battle for Crystal Palace and Hull City, however, who will fight it out with Norwich, Stoke and Fulham in the relegation dogfight.

BARCLAYS PREMIER LEAGUE

2012-13 SEASON

Manchester United won their 13th Premier League title and 20th English title overall when beating Aston Villa 3-0 at Old Trafford. Neighbours Manchester City were 16 points adrift in second place.

KEY STATS

Champions League qualifiers: Manchester United, Manchester City, Chelsea and Arsenal

Europa League qualifiers: Tottenham, Wigan and Swansea

Relegated: Queens Park Rangers, Reading and Wigan

Longest winning run: 7 games – Manchester United

Longest unbeaten run: 18 games – Manchester United

Longest winless run: 16 games – Queens Park Rangers

Longest losing run: 7 games – Reading

Highest attendance: 75,605 – Manchester United 1 Reading 0

Lowest attendance: 15,436 – Wigan Athletic 3 Reading 2

Average attendance: 35,931

SCORERS

Top goalscorers:
26 – Robin van Persie (Man United)
23 – Luis Suarez (Liverpool)
21 – Gareth Bale (Tottenham)
19 – Christian Benteke (Aston Villa)

Fastest goal of the season: 20 seconds – Theo Walcott (Arsenal)

Biggest home win: Chelsea 8 Aston Villa 0

Biggest away win: Newcastle United 0 Liverpool 6

Highest-scoring matches: Arsenal 7 Newcastle United 3; West Bromwich Albion 5 Manchester United 5

Most goals scored in a match by a losing team: 3
Reading 3 Manchester United 4
Swansea 3 Norwich City 4
Man Utd 4 Newcastle Utd 3
Norwich City 3 Man City 4
Arsenal 7 Newcastle United 3

CLEAN SHEETS

Most clean sheets:
18 – Joe Hart (Man City)
14 – Petr Cech (Chelsea) and Pepe Reina (Liverpool)

Fewest clean sheets: 5 – Aston Villa, Reading and Wigan Athletic

DISCIPLINE

Most yellow cards: 78 – Stoke City

Most yellow cards (player): 10 – Craig Gardner (Sunderland), Bradle Johnson (Norwich), Matthew Lowton (Aston Villa) and Luis Suarez (Liverpool)

Most red cards: 5 – Arsenal

Most red cards (player): 2 – Steven Pienaar (Everton) and Steve Sidwell (Fulham).

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2012-13 RECORD

CHAMPIONSHIP

Pos	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	46	25	12	9	72	45	+27	87

HOME

P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
23	15	6	2	37	15	+23	51

AWAY

P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
23	10	6	7	35	30	+5	36

CUP PROGRESS

	Stage	Lost to
FA Cup	Rd3	Macclesfield
League Cup	Rd1	Northampton

BIGGEST VICTORY

27/10/12	4-0	Burnley	C'ship

BIGGEST DEFEAT

25/08/12	2-4	Bristol C	C'ship

SUMMER MOVES

IN

Steven Caulker (Tottenham, £8m), Andreas Cornelius (FC Copenhagen, £7.5m), John Brayford (Derby, £1.5m)

OUT

Heidar Helguson (free), Stephen McPhail (free).

THE BOSS

Malky Mackay

Born: Bellshill, Scotland
Age: 41
Joined: 2011
Hons: Championship

FAN VIEW

I'm buzzing! This is going to be fantastic and I can't wait. Malky has done well to bring in Caulker from Spurs 'cos there are going to be times when it's backs to the wall - especially in January. But I really think we've got enough to avoid going straight back down – especially with Cornelius (stupid name but looks a great player). We've got to make sure we beat Palace and Hull, plus the Swans of course, then we should be okay.

Louise Peters

BETTING

Cardiff are 4-5 (Stan James) to finish the season as the best of the three promoted clubs, beating Hull and Palace.

Steven Caulker and John Brayford (inset right) have been brought in to stiffen Cardiff's defence for their first Premier League season

Tan the man

By Andrew Gwilym

Owner's move to clear debt raises City hopes

CARDIFF have already broken their transfer record twice this summer as they prepare for their maiden Premier League campaign, but it is an off-field deal which may prove more important than any signing.

Cardiff owner Vincent Tan had vowed to back manager Malky Mackay in the transfer market after the Scot guided the Bluebirds to the Championship title, and the Malaysian has proved true to his word.

Striker Andreas Cornelius has arrived from FC Copenhagen, while defender Steven Caulker has been snapped up from Tottenham, with the £8million paid for the England international just usurping the sum paid for Dane Cornelius as the club's largest outlay.

Derby defender John Brayford and Brentford keeper Simon Moore have also been added to the mix, but Mackay has made it clear he will make further additions to make sure Cardiff achieve their main priority of survival.

However, off-field events have arguably given Bluebirds' fans greater cause for cheer after the club were finally able to reach an agreement to settle the £24million debt owed to Langston Corporation, which has hung over them for almost a decade.

The deal has seen Cardiff pay a lump sum up front, believed to be £15million, with further, smaller payments scheduled.

Part of the arrangement sees Sam Hammam, owner of Cardiff when the debt was taking out, become an honorary life president, while his representative Michael Filiou has taken a place on the board.

Tan (inset) now plans to convert the substantial amount he is owed by the club into equity in order to ensure Cardiff become free of debt.

"For our owner to take his plans forward now with a clearer picture massively helps the football club," said Mackay

"I had a plan that I was working to and this doesn't affect that," added Mackay, who failed to convince Tom Ince to join from Blackpool after an £8million offer was accepted.

"If you're talking about off the field, then it's something that needed to happen and it was something that always was going to happen – it was only a matter of time.

"We were relaxed as to the plans the owner's got.

"He quite clearly stated he was going to clear the Langston debt and he's going to put seats in the stadium, and last year he was going to invest in the team to try to get us promoted and to invest in a new training ground.

"They're all things that we've actioned and are happening."

The feelgood nature of the summer will soon be forgotten if Cardiff cannot hold on to their top-flight status but, from the moment promotion was secured against Charlton in April, Mackay has vowed to make sure they are a competitive proposition.

"It's a huge challenge," he said that night.

"We are going into one of the best leagues in the world. We are going to plan properly, – that has started already – and we will now put that into action. We will make sure the structure we have put in place keeps striding forward and keeps adding because change is constant.

"We have been doing that for two years, changing and adapting and pushing at the envelope, and we will continue doing that to make sure we give ourselves the best chance in the Premier League.

"We have been competitive in the Championship, every team we have played in the last 20 months, we have been competitive against. That will not change in the Premier League."

One to watch

ANDREAS CORNELIUS

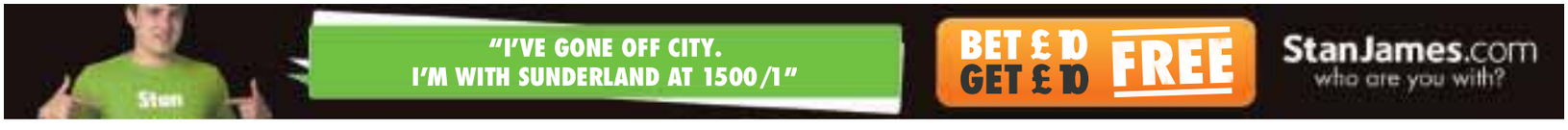
Born: Copenhagen
Age: 20
Position: Striker

Clubs	Apps	Goals
Copenhagen	34	18

FACT: Cornelius played only one full season for Copenhagen, but around 40 per cent of shirts sold carried his name.

Did you know?

Cardiff City are the only club from outside England to have won the FA Cup, which they secured by beating Arsenal in 1927 with cult figure Hughie Ferguson scoring the only goal. It was the first Cup Final to be broadcast on BBC Radio and is therefore believed to have attracted one of the highest audiences ever.



Ollie... seriously!

Behind the jokes, Palace boss knows his stuff

IAN HOLLOWAY is one of the most colourful characters in the Premier League, but underneath his goof-ball quotes and off-the-wall analogies lies a serious manager.

Holloway has won three promotions in his career: with QPR, Blackpool and with Crystal Palace, who beat Watford in last season's play-off final with an extra-time penalty from Kevin Phillips.

Getting up is one thing, but the challenge of keeping a newly-promoted team in the Premier League is quite another.

Holloway narrowly failed to achieve it with Blackpool as they were relegated on the final day of the 2010-11 season.

"We're on a hiding to nothing. God help us!" Holloway said as he contemplated the challenge that lies ahead for Palace.

But Phillips, Palace's 40-year-old striker, is not considering divine intervention. He believes Holloway's knowledge and experience, particularly from his time at Bloomfield Road, will be enough to establish Palace in the Premier League.

Phillips, the former England international who scored the winning goal at Wembley and has signed a new one-year deal with Palace, has seen Holloway's serious side and is impressed.

"I've worked under 19 managers in my career, I take a bit from everyone, but I've taken a lot from him over the past two seasons," Phillips said.

"He likes to be the joker sometimes, but he knows the game inside out and his enthusiasm is incredible. It rubs off on players. It rubs off on me.

"He will have learned from his experiences in the Premier League. He will have learned from his Blackpool days, that maybe they were a bit too gung-ho.

"You will never take that attacking style out of him. But when you are attacking, the old cliché is that you are at your most vulnerable – organisation is a big part of his coaching.

"I think if you watched the three play-off games, that showed. We looked hard to break down, and you will certainly have to be that in the Premier League."

History shows that promoted managers are liable to get the sack. It happened last season to Brian McDermott at Reading and Nigel Adkins at Southampton.

"There's no logic in football management," Holloway said. "If you're looking for logic then don't look at football. The game has never been quite as crazy as it is now. All I can say is it's exciting, however you do it."

Although Holloway has lost Wilfried Zaha to Manchester United, exciting young midfielders Yannick Bolasie and Johnny Williams will prove their Premier League pedigree at Selhurst Park this season.

Holloway has bolstered his squad with the signings of Peterborough striker Dwight Gayle, Stephen Dobbie from Brighton and Jerome Thomas from West Brom, but he is most excited about the arrival of Jose Campana.

The Spain Under-20 captain fits with Holloway's vision for how football should be played, and he has arrived from Sevilla on a four-year deal in what could prove to be a major coup for the Eagles.

"He's going to be a great star of the future and the present," Holloway said.

"Everybody knows the way I want to try to play football and how fantastic Spain have been over the past few years, so I'm delighted to get a lad of this quality. We're going to try to do as well as we can in this division, and making signings like this is really going to help us."

Palace should take heart from the performances of West Ham and Swansea, the previous two play-off winners who have succeeded in establishing themselves in the Premier League.

Whatever happens, it will not be dull at Selhurst Park this season.

CRYSTAL PALACE

Formed	1905
Manager	Ian Holloway
Ground	Selhurst Park
Capacity	26,309
Nickname	The Eagles
Website	www.cpfc.co.uk

SUMMER MOVES

IN

Dwight Gayle (Peterborough, £6m), Stephen Dobie (Brighton, £850,000), Jerome Thomas (West Brom, free), Kevin Phillips (Blackpool, free).

OUT

Andre Moritz (free), Alex Marrow (Blackburn, free).

THE BOSS

Ian Holloway
Born: Bristol
Age: 50
Joined: 2012
Hons: Second Division promotion (QPR); South West Challenge Cup (Blackpool); Championship Play-off winner (Blackpool and Palace)

BETTING

Palace are 7-4 ON (Stan James) to concede the most goals in the top flight.

Bruce the survivor can have last laugh

By Rory Dollard

WHEN Steve Bruce leans across his technical area to shake the hand of Jose Mourinho on the first day of the Premier League season, he would be forgiven a moment to reflect on what might have been.

Hull's curtain-raiser at Chelsea marks Bruce's first top-flight fixture since a 2-1 home defeat to Wigan in November 2011 saw him sacked as Sunderland boss.

Yet instead of pitting his wits against the returning 'Special One', he might just as easily have been starting a second full season in charge of Wolves.

Bruce will need no reminding that the club who withdrew their interest in him at an indecently late stage of the hunt for Mick McCarthy's successor have had four managers and two relegations since, and are now in League One.

Sunderland, meanwhile, almost dropped out of the Premier League under Bruce's replacement Michael O'Neill and endured a turbulent start to the reign of current boss Paolo Di Canio.

Bruce's own journey in that period seems joyously successful by comparison with the two clubs who spurned him. He cut a contented figure on his occasional media appearances, and when he did return to the dugout last summer he took an unfancied Tigers squad up at the first attempt. It was his third promotion from the notoriously competitive second-tier and second as runners-up following the 2006-07 campaign with Birmingham.

So Bruce will tackle the coming season as a man with a point to prove. Speaking after sealing Hull's promotion on the final day of the season, Bruce noted: "I took over a team that had avoided relegation on the last day, we finished 13th in the first year, 10th in the second, balanced the books and then I got the sack after 11 games.

"Of course it hurt me. I thought I'd get a chance and it didn't happen."

Suffice to say, the Tigers' trip to the Stadium of Light on February 8 will already have been underlined in bold by Bruce.

The other team that would have drawn special attention when the fixtures emerged is, of course, Manchester United. Having spent 10 years at the club as a player, he has gone almost as long attempting to find a way to beat them, an unproductive run of games that has long since passed into double figures and taken in Bruce's time at Birmingham, Wigan and Sunderland.

The big change when he attempts to change his luck at the KC Stadium on Boxing Day is the absence of his mentor Sir Alex Ferguson.

"I've never beaten Sir Alex as a manager, and now I won't get the chance," he observed said when the great Scot announced his retirement late last season.

Bruce has been among the Premier League's busier managers over the summer, perhaps unsurprising given the late dip in performances that briefly threatened to leave Hull in the play-offs.

His transfer policy has been wide-reaching, but all his signings would fit under the label 'affordable': A season long-loan (Danny Graham from Sunderland); a restless Briton ready for home (Allan McGregor, Besiktas); a former player (Maynor Figueroa, Wigan); an inexpensive punt from the continental aisle (Yannick Sagbo, Evian); and a most expensive signing of £2.2million in the shape of defender Curtis Davies from Birmingham City.

HULL CITY

Formed	1904
Manager	Steve Bruce
Ground	KC Stadium
Capacity	25,586
Nickname	The Tigers
Website	www.hullcityafc.net

SUMMER MOVES

IN

Curtis Davies (Birmingham, £2.25m), Ahmed Elmohamady (Sunderland, £2m), Allan McGregor (Besiktas, £1.8m), George Boyd (Peterborough, free), Maynor Figueroa (Wigan, free), Steve Harper (Newcastle United, free), Yannick Sagbo (Evian, undisclosed), Danny Graham (Sunderland, Loan)

OUT

Andy Dawson (Scunthorpe, free), Seyi Olofinjana (free), Jay Simpson (free), Jamie Devitt (Chesterfield, free).

THE BOSS

Steve Bruce
Born: Norbridge
Age: 52
Joined: 2012
Hons: Championship (Birmingham); Championship runner-up (Brmingham and Hull)

BETTING

Hull are 9-4 (Stan James) to finish as the best of the promoted clubs.

EVERTON

Formed	1878
Manager	Roberto Martinez
Ground	Goodison Park
Capacity	40,157
Nickname	The Toffees
Website	www.evertonfc.com

2012-13 RECORD

BARCLAYS PREMIER LEAGUE

Pos	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
6	38	16	15	7	55	40	+15	63

HOME

P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
19	12	6	1	33	17	+16	42

AWAY

P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
19	4	9	6	22	23	-1	21

CUP PROGRESS

	Stage	Lost to
FA Cup	QF	Wigan
League Cup	Rd3	Leeds

BIGGEST VICTORY

29/8/12 5-0 L Orient C Cup

BIGGEST DEFEAT

09/03/13 0-3 Wigan Prem

SUMMER MOVES

IN

Arouna Kone (Wigan, £6m), Joel Robles (Atletico Madrid, £2m), Antolin Alcaraz (Wigan, free), Gerard Deulofeu (Barcelona, loan).

OUT

Thomas Hitzlsperger (free), Jan Mucha (Krylia Sovetov, free), Phil Neville (retired).

THE BOSS

Roberto Martinez

Born: Balaguer, Spain
Age: 40
Joined: June 2013
Hons: League One (Swansea), FA Cup (Wigan)

FAN VIEW

'Bob' Martinez could be a disaster, however the signs are good and he's walking the walk well so far. I was one of David Moyes' biggest fans, but I sincerely hope Bob does better here. He is fresh, and that's what Everton needed after so many years of being on the edge of things. Whether he goes on to win something straight away is a big ask, but he should be given a chance.

Andy Hunter

BETTING

Everton are 33-1 (Stan James) to finish the season as the Premier League's highest goalscorers.

MARTINEZ SETS SIGHTS HIGH FOR 'UNIQUE' CLUB

'We should be dreaming of getting to the Champions League'

By Carl Markham

EVERTON manager Roberto Martinez finds himself in an unfamiliar position as he begins a new career at Goodison Park.

In his four years at Wigan he was given carte blanche to indoctrinate his own style, immediately dispensing with the more pragmatic methods of his predecessor Steve Bruce.

It was ultimately justified as his way of working brought the club their first FA Cup triumph, even if it did come at the cost of relegation.

Having moved on to Everton, there is a slightly more delicate balancing act to be done.

The Spaniard cannot instantly dismiss the previous decade under David Moyes, which saw the club regularly punching above their weight, and going even further back there is a glorious history to consider.

He does want to put his own stamp on the side he has inherited, and if ever there was a man capable of keeping everyone happy it is Martinez. And however he does it, you can guarantee it will be done with a certain panache – and a beaming smile.

"I do feel that it is important that in football you get a winning style," he said.

"Obviously everyone will highlight the late 1980s when the team reached an incredible reputation around Europe, and that's ingrained in the football club.

"There's a lot of talk about finding different styles and being attractive to watch. Clearly I'm excited about bringing a mixture of what Everton represents and what Everton stands for together with my beliefs in the game, and taking all the good things that Everton have done over the last few seasons. That's a unique combination.

"We need to be a team that is capable of being flexible from a tactical point of view.

"We need to be in a position where we can keep the ball well and where we can break things down. That's what I'm really looking forward to – coming up with a unique Everton style. We all need to drive together to be a team that can carry on being competitive in every game we go into, slowly growing into something special."

Martinez has one advantage over his predecessor: he has won something. That FA Cup victory over Manchester City proved there could be substance to his style, and the 40-year-old admits the taste of success has only made him more hungry. "Once you win silverware it is an addictive feeling. I do feel that is something we want to continue here," he said. "Everton has an incredible history and tradition, and the work David Moyes has done has laid a platform where, in the next few years, we should be dreaming of getting to the Champions League.

"There are six clubs (both Manchester sides, Chelsea, Arsenal,Tottenham and Liverpool) who are working at a different finance level to the others, but I believe with our tools and our genetic make-up in the club we can find a way to compete with those teams.

"That has to be the aim for the future. It doesn't mean next season, in two seasons' time – it has to be the dream of every Evertonian.

"In any club you need to be moved by an ambition and in football if you don't have dreams you will never achieve anything.

"It is important we set that clearly without expecting that to be a target straightaway."

One to watch

AROUNA KONE
Born: Anyama, Ivory Coast
Age: 29
Position: Striker

Clubs	Apps	Goals
Rio Sport	30	17
Lierse	32	11
Roda	63	27
PSV	53	21
Sevilla	40	1
Hannover 96 (loan)	8	2
Levante (loan)	34	15
Wigan	33	11

Did you know?

Three of the 10 youngest players every to appear in the Premier League have done so for Everton. Jose Baxter is third on the list at 16 years 191 days, James Vaughan ninth at 16 years 270 days and Wayne Rooney 10th at 16 years 297 days. Fulham's Matthew Briggs is the youngest at a mere 16 years and 65 days.

Yes we KHAN

New owner raises hope of progress for Fulham

By Simon Peach

WHEN a club is bought by one of the richest men in the world, it is only natural for them to look to the stars.

For Fulham, though, evolution rather than revolution looks to be the way ahead.

Shahid Khan is worth £1.9billion, according to Forbes magazine, making him the world's 490th most wealthy man.

Born in Pakistan, the 62-year-old moved to the United States aged 16 to attend college and secured an engineering degree from the University of Illinois.

Khan went on to create an motor parts empire and his riches allowed him to buy NFL franchise the Jacksonville Jaguars, who will play one regular season game at Wembley in each of the next four years.

Those links to London saw him move for Fulham this summer, taking over from Mohamed Al Fayed in a reported £200million deal.

> "He is not here to burn his money, and some clubs are doing that"

Over 16 years, the former Harrods owner has overseen the west Londoners' ascent from the lower reaches of the Football League to become an established Premier League force.

Such generosity and support means Al Fayed is adored by Fulham fans, and Khan has pledged to continue his "incredible legacy" and take them on to the next step.

"On the pitch, we have to have sustainable results moving forwards," he said.

"I have felt that football clubs, whether soccer or NFL football clubs, are civic institutions. We are custodians of that. It is business, yet it is a civic asset.

"Fulham is going to be Fulham. It has its unique character, unique history and our goal would be to develop that, respect that and move it forwards."

One of Khan's first moves will be to get the development of the Riverside Stand under way, which would see Craven Cottage's capacity increased to 30,000.

He will also provide funds to strengthen the squad, although manager Martin Jol is not expecting the new owner to throw money about.

"He is a very energetic man and he wants us to deal well," he said of Khan. "He is not here to burn his money, and some clubs are doing that. Sometimes they do well, sometimes they struggle. We have to find a healthy way to do our business. That doesn't mean we will pay £20m for a player, even £10m.

"I am excited about the youngsters and if the players come to this club I hope, and we are dealing with a few, the future will be bright."

Those bright talents come from Fulham's excellent academy, which has won the Barclays Under-18 Premier League title for the past three seasons and the national final for the past two. A number of those players will be pushing for a first-team berth this campaign, as will youngsters like Mesca, Chris David and Marcello Trotta.

Jol has worked smartly to add to those promising players, bringing in Derek Boateng and Fernando Amorebieta on free transfers from Dnipro and Athletic Bilbao respectively, plus Adel Taarabt on a season-long loan from QPR. Maarten Stekelenburg, Holland's goalkeeper in the 2010 World Cup final, has also arrived to replace Mark Schwarzer.

Such business is a far cry from last season, when the departures of Mousa Dembele, Clint Dempsey and Danny Murphy led to instability that affected them throughout.

Now, with Khan leading the evolution from the top and Jol from the field, things are looking much brighter by the Thames.

Former owner Mohamed Al Fayed (left) dons a comedy moustache as he hands stewardship of the club to American billionaire Shahid Khan

One to watch

MAARTEN STEKELENBURG
Born: Haarlem, Holland
Age: 30
Position: Goalkeeper

Clubs	Apps	Goals
Ajax	191	0
Roma	48	0

FACT: Stekelenburg took over as Dutch first-choice when Edwin van der Sar retired and has 54 caps.

Did you know?

Fulham have never won a major honour, although they have reached two major finals. In 1975, as a Second Division team, they played in the FA Cup final for the only time in their history, losing 2–0 to West Ham. The Cottagers also reached the 2010 Europa League final, losing 2-1 to Atletico Madrid in Hamburg after extra time.

FULHAM

Formed	1879
Manager	Martin Jol
Ground	Craven Cottage
Capacity	25,700
Nickname	The Cottagers
Website	www.fulham.co.uk

2012-13 RECORD

BARCLAYS PREMIER LEAGUE

Pos	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
12	38	11	10	17	50	60	-10	43

HOME

P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
19	7	3	9	28	30	-2	24

AWAY

P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
19	4	7	8	22	30	-8	19

CUP PROGRESS

	Stage	Lost to
FA Cup	Rd4	Man Utd
League Cup	Rd2	Sheff Wed

BIGGEST VICTORY

18/8/12	5-0	Norwich	Prem

BIGGEST DEFEAT

22/12/12	0-4	Liverpool	Prem

SUMMER MOVES

IN

Maarten Stekelenburg (Roma, £4.76m), Sasha Riether (Cologne, £1.27m), Fernando Amorebieta (Athletic Bilbao, free), Derek Boateng (Dnipro, free), Ange-Freddy Plumain (Lens, free)

OUT

Mark Schwarzer (Chelsea, free), Chris Baird (free), Simon Davies (free), Mahamadou Diarra (free), Mladen Petric (free).

THE BOSS

Martin Jol
Born: The Hague, Netherlands
Age: 57
Joined: 2011
Hons: KNVB Cup (2)

FAN VIEW

Fulham's fortunes seem to run parallel with the Stroppy One, Dimitar Berbatov. If he's on form and motivated, we do okay, if not we seem to go backwards. He may be a loose canon, but he's the type of player that can win a game for any team and I reckon we'll have a decent season.

Stan Peters

BETTING

Fulham are 6-4 (Stan James) to finish above fellow London clubs West Ham and Crystal Palace.

Stars are alignec

CHELSEA

Formed	1905
Manager	Jose Mourinho
Ground	Stamford Bridge
Capacity	41,837
Nickname	The Blues
Website	www.chelseafc.co.uk

2012-13 RECORD

BARCLAYS PREMIER LEAGUE

Pos	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pt
3	38	22	9	7	75	39	+36	75

HOME

P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pt
19	12	5	2	41	16	+25	41

AWAY

P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pt
19	10	4	5	34	23	+9	34

CUP PROGRESS

	Stage	Lost to
FA Cup	Semis	Man City
League Cup	Semis	Swansea
Europa League	Won	-

BIGGEST VICTORY

23/12/12 8-0 Villa Prem

BIGGEST DEFEAT

31/08/2012 1-4 At Madrid S Cup

SUMMER MOVES

IN

Andre Schurrle (Bayer Leverkusen, £18m), Marco van Ginkel (Vitesse Arnhem, £9m), Mark Schwarzer (Fulham, free), Cristian Cuevas (O'Higgins, £3m).

OUT

Yossi Benayoun (free), Paulo Ferreira (free), Hilario (free), Florent Malouda (Trabzonspor, free), Ross Turnbull (free), Thibaut Courtois (Atletico Madrid, season loan), Marko Marin (Sevilla, season loan), Oriol Romeu (Valencia, season loan), Paulo Ferreira (retired).

THE BOSS

Jose Mourinho

Born: Setubal, Portugal

Age: 50

Joined: July 2013

Hons: Primeira Liga, Taca de Portugal, Supertaca Candido de Oliveira, Champions League (2), UEFA Cup, Seria A, Coppa Italia, Supercoppa Italiana, La Liga, Copa del Rey, Spanish Cup. Premier League (2), FA Cup, League Cup (2), Community Shield.

BETTING

Fernandino looks a tasty 25-1 (Stan James) to be PFA Player of the Year if he gets off to a decent start.

Jose Mourinho insists he does not want to rest on the laurels of what he achieved in his first spell in charge of Chelsea, when he won back-to-back titles

Mourinho has tools to build for more glory

By Matt McGeehan

EVERYTHING appears to be in place for Chelsea to challenge for major honours this season, including a first Premier League title since 2010, after the return of the self-proclaimed Special One.

After two seasons in which dysfunctional events at Stamford Bridge have remarkably ended in continental success, the Blues have been reunited with Jose Mourinho, an experienced core has been joined by some of Europe's most exciting prospects and rival teams are rebuilding under new management.

Unlike his counterparts at Manchester United and Manchester City – the last two title winners – Chelsea's 'new' boss has been at the sharp end of an English title race before.

Mourinho is the most successful manager in Chelsea's history – he won the Blues' first title in 50 years in 2005 and successfully defended the trophy – and went on to achieve success at Inter Milan and Real Madrid following his September 2007 departure from west London.

His players say his appetite for glory is undiminished; the hunger to achieve at Chelsea remains. There is unfinished business for the newly-styled Happy One at Stamford Bridge.

The Champions League and a third European Cup with a third club following success at Porto and Inter is a target, but so too is the Premier League.

Following mixed fortunes in the Champions League of late, Mourinho clearly feels the Premier League rewards success more fairly. He said: "Year after year I'm more convinced that the Champions League is a special competition where, sometimes, the difference between winning and not winning is a small detail: a moment of luck that decides things. A competition like the Premier League, the best team wins."

Many in English football have missed the charismatic presence of Mourinho, not

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d for Chelsea

Mourinho with Ashley Cole who, along with John Terry, Petr Cech and Frank Lampard (below) form the spine of the team from his first spell at the club

One to watch

Marco van Ginkel
Born: Amersfoort, Netherlands
Age: 20
Position: Midfielder

Clubs	Apps	Goals
Vitesse	93	18

FACT: Van Ginkel was named Dutch Football Talent of the Year last season.

Did you know?

Juan Mata is aiming to be the first player in the club's history to win the Player of the Year award three times on the trot. He has joined Charlie Cooke, David Webb, John Hollins, Ray Wilkins, Pat Nevin, Dennis Wise, Gianfranco Zola and John Terry in winning it twice, while Frank Lampard (04, 05, 09) is the only player to win it three times.

least Chelsea. Since his departure, there have been seven managers.

Success has continued, including the 2012 Champions League, but so too has the hire and fire recruitment policy.

It seems inconceivable that Mourinho, who signed a four-year contract on his return, will fail to complete the season, but he knows he will not be afforded special treatment based on his reputation. "I don't want to be loved for what I did before," he said. "I want to be loved because of what I'm doing now and what I will do in the future.

"That kind of situation is good for everybody. We have to give the maximum and not feel we are protected because of what we did in the past."

Much has changed in the years between Mourinho's spells in charge, but much is the same, too. John Terry remains captain and talisman, while Petr Cech, Ashley Cole, Frank Lampard and Michael Essien are still in the squad.

Innovations which the Portuguese established – the sports medicine unit, for example – are firmly embedded at the state-of-the-art Cobham training ground.

Mourinho will be tasked with cultivating his younger players, rather than requesting funds be spent to recruit the world's best talent.

He says he is more mature, calmer, but the rage of old could return if Mourinho is felt wronged in defeat. That passion is one of the many reasons the players relate to, and perform for, him.

The Blues squad has been inspired by his return, with Cole feeling indebted to the man who signed him in a controversial move from Arsenal. Cole, who played for Mourinho for little more than a season before the Portuguese's departure in September 2007, said: "Having the manager back now from 2006, when he bought me, I still feel I owe him something.

"I didn't really feel I played as well as I could and as well as I have for Chelsea (since), when he bought me.

"On a personal level, I think I owe him a lot. As a team, I hope we can go on and win many trophies. It's a big club and we need to win trophies.

"With the new players we've got in, we're confident that hopefully this season could be a great season for Chelsea again.

"I've been lucky enough to win big trophies. Of course, I hope to win more. Having the manager back, hopefully we can do it all together. As players we owe it to the manager to win the League or Champions League again."

The stars appear to have aligned for Mourinho and Chelsea once more.

Andre Schurrle makes his mark for Chelsea in pre-season

Schurrle relishes challenge to win a first-team spot

By Euan Parsons

CHELSEA new boy Andre Schurrle believes he has what it takes to be a mainstay in the Blues' forward line, despite fierce competition for places at Stamford Bridge.

The Germany international became Jose Mourinho's first signing of the summer when he joined from Bayer Leverkusen for £18million at the end of June. Chelsea have since added Dutch midfielder Marco van Ginkel and veteran goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer to their squad.

Schurrle is a versatile forward who can ply his trade on the wing or as a centre forward, but his most comfortable position is just in behind a central striker.

The Europa League winners already have a large number of attacking options, and with Kevin De Bruyne and Romelu Lukaku returning to the fold after last season's loan spells, the 22-year-old knows he will have to fight for his place in Mourinho's starting XI.

"In every big club there will always be good competition," he said.

"That's what I wanted. I wanted this move, I wanted this step. I have to train hard, I have to work hard and then we will see.

"I want to improve myself, I want to improve all the time and what I really want is to help the team, with my qualities, to be successful." The young forward is thrilled to have finally signed for Chelsea, a move which had been poken about for some time before Mourinho's return to the club.

He added: "It was hard for me last summer that I didn't come here, but I wanted to be a professional, I wanted to do my best for Leverkusen. That's what I did.

"I'm really happy, I'm really looking forward to being a Chelsea player."

With the 2014 World Cup just around the corner, Schurrle understands the importance of playing regular football this season and has every intention of representing Germany at next summer's tournament in Brazil.

He said: "For every player it's important.

"You have to do a good job for the World Cup. We have big goals for the German national team next year. It's really important."

Schurrle scored 18 goals in 65 appearances for Leverkusen and knows achieving success with Chelsea will not be straightforward, but is confident his new team will be able to compete.

"There are so many good teams in the Premier League. There will always be Man United, Man City, Arsenal, Tottenham," he said. "Big clubs, big teams, good quality, but we have very good quality too."

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NEWCASTLE

Formed	1892
Manager	Alan Pardew
Ground	St James' Park
Capacity	52,404
Nickname	The Magpies
Website	www.nufc.co.uk

2012-13 RECORD

BARCLAYS PREMIER LEAGUE

Pos	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
16	38	11	8	19	45	68	-23	41

HOME

P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
19	9	1	9	24	31	-7	28

AWAY

P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
19	2	7	10	21	37	-16	13

CUP PROGRESS

	Stage	Lost to
FA Cup	QF	Wigan
League Cup	Rd3	Leeds

BIGGEST VICTORY

29/8/12 5-0 L Orient C Cup

BIGGEST DEFEAT

09/03/13 0-3 Wigan Prem

SUMMER MOVES

IN

Olivier Kemen (Metz, undisclosed).

OUT

Steve Harper (Hull, free), Yven Moyo (free), Danny Simpson (QPR, free), James Perch (Wigan, undisclosed), Shane Ferguson (Birmingham, season loan).

THE BOSS

Alan Pardew

Born: Wimbledon

Age: 51

Joined: 2012

Hons: Second Division runner-up (Reading); FA Cup runner-up, Championship play-offs (West Ham); Football League Trophy (Southampton)

FAN VIEW

Love him or loathe him we've got to back Alan Pardew and try to forget all about last season. The guy deserves a second chance after what he did the previous year. In any case, if he fails we could end up with Joke Kinnear! Fighting defeats are fair enough, but pathetic capitulations won't be acceptable.

Paul Greaves

BETTING

Newcastle are 22-1 (Stan James) to have scored the least number of goals after three games.

Newcastle fans make their feelings known by urging support for the team rather than the regime, with Joe Kinnear (inset) likely to be a target for any unrest

Pardew's tough time at the Toon

By Damian Spellman

IF a week is a long time in football, a year can seem like an eternity.

That, at least, is how it must appear to Alan Pardew.

Twelve months ago, the Newcastle boss was basking in the glory of being named the League Managers' Association's Manager of the Season following a thrilling surge into fifth place and, as a result, a place in Europe.

His stock could hardly have risen any higher, and he was duly rewarded with an unprecedented eight-year contract in September last year.

However, as the 52-year-old prepares to embark on a new Premier League campaign, that must all seem a very, very long time ago.

The return to continental competition handed the Toon Army a chance to re-live the years under Sir Bobby Robson, when they rubbed shoulders with some of Europe's biggest clubs, and appeared destined to do so for some time.

But it also cruelly exposed the lack of depth in a squad to which Vurnon Anita was the only senior addition last summer, and the impact of the extra games and the travelling they involved took a devastating toll on domestic affairs.

Pardew had warned in advance that a repeat of the previous season's heroics was unlikely, but just how far they were to slip – they eventually dragged themselves out of an unexpected relegation fight with just one game to spare – came as something of a shock.

But the surprises did not stop there for the manager.

His end-of-term visit to the headmaster's office – or, more precisely, that of owner Mike Ashley, whose sizeable January investment in Mathieu Debuchy, Mapou Yanga-Mbiwa, Massadio Haidara, Moussa Sissoko and Yoan Gouffran had only just enabled to club to survive – was uncomfortable, but ended with his mandate intact. Or so he thought.

In a move which astonished even seasoned viewers of the soap opera which life at St James' Park so often resembles, Ashley unilaterally decided to install a director of football above his manager, and for good measure, handed the job to Joe Kinnear, a man whose reputation on Tyneside had hardly been enhanced by his brief spell as manager. Once again, the battle lines were drawn. Managing director Derek Llambias, formerly the sportswear magnate's closest ally, voted with his feet and resigned as Tyneside was once again engulfed by a collective fury.

Kinnear hardly helped himself by mangling facts and mispronouncing the names of some of Pardew's players, most memorably referring to France international Yohan Cabaye (left) as "Yohan Kebab", further fanning the flames of discontent.

Pardew kept his own counsel throughout the initial furore, and while insisting he is open-minded over the new structure, has wasted few opportunities to remind anyone who cares to ask that he, and he alone, is the manager.

He said: "Anyone who knows me will tell you that in my career, I have not let anyone step on my toes. I will be my own man because, ultimately, I carry the responsibility of the team.

"I have got a seven-year contract left to manage this football club and I am going to manage it to the best of my ability, and I hope that what we wish for is what I can deliver."

Ironically, this summer's events have served to shift the focus of blame for last season's failings away from Pardew – calls for his head from a vocal section of the club's support grew in volume as a testing campaign drew to a close – on to Ashley's continued presence on Tyneside and Kinnear's return, which in the eyes of many simply signalled the beginning of the end for the 52-year-old.

In truth, responsibility had to be apportioned widely: to Ashley and Llambias for their failure to strengthen the squad sufficiently this time last year; to Pardew for his team selection and tactics at times; and to the players, many of whom did not perform to the high standards they had done so previously.

But a series of unforeseen issues – Cabaye, one of the club's most influential players, admitted to suffering depression at one point, while skipper Fabricio Coloccini asked to be allowed to leave because of personal problems – and a succession of costly injuries contributed to a perfect storm which left Pardew reeling.

He said with a smile: "I have been here two-and-a-half years, and I have probably experienced every emotion you could go through – and that was in the first six weeks."

However, the former West Ham boss will attack the new season confident that whatever has happened off the pitch, life on it will be much more fruitful this time.

He said: "What must be remembered is we have got a good team here, good staff. We have had stability now for three years and I will protect that."

One to watch

HATEM BEN ARFA

Born: Clamart, France
Age: 26
Position: Midfield

Clubs	Apps	Goals
Lyon	64	7
Marseilles	63	9
Newcastle	49	10

FACT: Ben Arfa has played for France at every level from Under-16 to senior.

Did you know?

The club has played at St James' Park every since its formation in 1892 following a merger of Newcastle East End and Newcastle West End. They have been champions four times and have never dropped below the second tier of English football. In terms of revenue, they are rated the world's 20th richest club.

Di Canio's talking about a revolution

By Damian Spellman

EVER since Paolo Di Canio walked through the doors at Sunderland's Academy of Light training headquarters, an air of impending revolution has enveloped the club.

A little more than four months after his appointment, the pace of change has been little short of spectacular. Sunderland owner and chairman Ellis Short has fully bought into the Italian's strategy and backed an overhaul designed to shed the Black Cats' reputation as perennial Premier League strugglers once and for all.

It is a challenge predecessors Roy Keane, Steve Bruce and Martin O'Neill have each taken up, but ultimately failed to accomplish, and that track record, coupled with Di Canio's bullish approach to the task, sowed the seeds of a radical re-think.

Sunderland fans should perhaps not have been surprised.

Former Swindon chief executive Nick Watkins has described the 45-year-old Italian's style as "management by hand grenade" and while Di Canio bristles at the suggestion, there is little doubt that he is not afraid to shake things up.

Whatever else he is, Sunderland's latest manager is different.

Emanuele Giaccherini shows his intent in Sunderland's Asia Trophy clash against Tottenham

He arrived on Wearside amid a blaze of publicity, much of it negative, after Short decided to dispense with O'Neill's services in a desperate bid to avoid relegation.

Di Canio, much to his annoyance, was grilled over his political beliefs – his earlier assertion that he was a fascist, not a racist cut little ice with his critics and the Black Cats found themselves at the centre of a storm.

There was something of a squall brewing in the dressing room too, with the manager leaving his players in little doubt as to what was required of them both on and off the pitch. Di Canio said: "Everybody has to change mentality because if we are going always to delegate to others to do the job for us, we are going to remain an average team despite the fantastic potential the club has." To that end, misdemeanours within the training ground have been punished by fines and those guilty of on-field indiscipline have been warned as to their future conduct.

However, it is on the field that Di Canio hopes the fruits of his labours behind the scenes will be most evident.

A 3-0 derby victory at Newcastle in only his second game at the helm firmly established the controversial newcomer in the affections of the club's fans, and when that was followed by a narrow win over Everton, his stock could hardly have been higher.

However, a 6-1 capitulation at relegation rivals Aston Villa tempered the excitement and although the Black Cats eventually limped over the finishing line in 17th place, Di Canio was under few illusions that all he had done was paper over the cracks.

The preferred solution has been enterprising to say the least.

With the minimum of fuss, director of football Roberto De Fanti has been installed and along with new chief scout Valentino Angeloni, the playing staff has undergone an extreme makeover. A similar policy to that employed in recent years by Newcastle of buying young European players with potential has formed the basis of the rebuilding programme, although Di Canio's swoops for Italy international Emanuele Giaccherini, Basle midfielder Cabral and AZ Alkmaar striker Jozy Altidore have served as an eloquent statement of intent.

In addition, the squad has been subjected to a rigorous pre-season training regime which the manager hopes will pay dividends.

Di Canio said: "Obviously we made a revolution, but to be honest, I wasn't worried at the beginning and now even less so. It's obvious that when you change a lot, it's difficult to think about a place where you can finish at the end of the season. But our plan is to stay up more comfortably than last year."

Opinion is divided on Di Canio's masterplan: his devotees are predicting a glorious surge up the Premier League table with some of the more fanciful eyeing, if with tongue firmly in cheek, a Champions League spot after the club's impressive Barclays Asia Trophy showing in Hong Kong; the more pessimistic fear it is all too much, too soon and will eventually end in tears.

The actual target lies somewhere in between the two, but one thing is for certain: it will be far from dull.

SUNDERLAND

Formed	1879
Manager	Paolo Di Canio
Ground	Stadium of Light
Capacity	49,000
Nickname	The Blackcats
Website	www.safc.co.uk

SUMMER MOVES

IN

Jozy Altidore (AZ Alkmaar, £6.5m), Emanuele Giaccherini (Juventus, £6.5m), Vito Mannone (Arsenal, £1.5m), David Moberg Karlsson (IFK Gothenburg, £1.5m), El-Hadji Ba (Le Havre, undisclosed), Duncan Whatmore (Altrincham, undisclosed), Cabral (Basel, free), Modibo Diakite (Lazio, free), Valentin Roberge (Maritimo, free).

OUT

Simon Mignolet (Liverpool, £9m), Titus Bramble (free), Matt Kilgallon (Blackburn, free), Danny Graham (Hull, season loan), Alfred N'Diaye (Eskisehirspor, season loan), James McLean (Wigan).

THE BOSS

Paolo Di Canio

Born: Rome, Italy
Age: 45
Joined: 2011
Hons: League Two (Swindon)

BETTING

Sunderland are 52-1 (Stan James) to score most goals after three games.

Europe is realistic, says Saints youngster James

IT took seven tumultuous years for Southampton to claw their way back to the Premier League – where they are now planning to stay for the foreseeable future.

Few could have predicted the travails that followed the end of Saints' 27-year spell in the top flight on the last day of the 2004-05 season.

It was a time dominated by adversity and, at times, tragedy. In August 2010, just over a year after saving the club from bankruptcy, owner Markus Liebherr died aged 62.

His dream was to take Saints back to the Premier League, and one that was achieved in his honour under executive chairman Nicola Cortese.

Back-to-back promotions saw the club back in the big time, where they finished last season 14th.

Now the club is not only looking to avoid 'second season syndrome', but push towards even loftier ambitions.

"I don't think it is beyond the realm of possibility to go into Europe," said midfielder James Ward-Prowse (*right*). "I think we are capable of doing that. We showed towards the end of last season that we have got the quality and desire to be there.

"We've come up the leagues quite quickly. It is not outside the realm of possibility. It is definitely a challenge, but one we are going to relish and hopefully reach."

Ward-Prowse is not the first to mention Europe, and given the club's transfer dealings it is no surprise.

Lyon defender Dejan Lovren arrived for £8.5million this summer, before the club brought in Celtic's Victor Wanyama for more than the club record £12m spent on Gaston Ramirez the previous year.

There is still money to spend as manager Mauricio Pochettino prepares for his first full season in charge. The Argentinian controversially replaced Nigel Adkins in January, but quickly won around the doubters with his high-energy, pressing game.

"This is the hardest period of football I've had," said the 18-year-old Ward-Prowse. "The new coaches like hard work, like intense work, so it is important we abide by that and believe in their way. The style is slightly different but I think it is suitable to the squad of players we've got. I think everyone's really enjoying his coaching."

Pochettino has also focused on bringing the group together, which saw them walk on hot coals and break arrows with their collarbones during a camp in Spain.

"It was a good little bit of team-bonding for us all that we all got into it," Ward-Prowse said. "I think everyone has taken loads of confidence from him and his ways. I think everyone is improving."

SOUTHAMPTON

Formed	1885
Manager	Mauricio Pochettino
Ground	St Mary's Stadium
Capacity	32,690
Nickname	The Saints
Website	www.saintsfc.co.uk

SUMMER MOVES

IN

Victor Wanyama (Celtic, £12.5m), Dejan Lovren (Lyon, £8.5m).

OUT

Frazer Richardson (free), Danny Butterfield (free), Vegard Forren (Molde, undisclosed), Richard Chaplow (Millwall, free).

THE BOSS

Mauricio Pochettino

Born: Murphy, Argentina
Age: 41
Joined: 2013
Hons: None

BETTING

Southampton are 20-1 (Stan James) to concede the fewest goals in the first three games.

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SWANSEA CITY

Formed	1912
Manager	Michael Laudrup
Ground	Liberty Stadium
Capacity	20,750
Nickname	The Swans
Website	www.swanseacity.net

SUMMER MOVES

IN

Wilfried Bony (Vitesse Arnhem, £12m), Jonjo Shelvey (Liverpool, £5m), Jonathan De Guzman (Villarreal, season loan), Jordi Amat (Espanyol, £2.5m), Jose Canas (Real Betis, undisclosed), Alejandro Pozuelo (Real Betis, undisclosed), Gregor Zabret (NK Domzale, undisclosed), Alex Gogic (Olympiakos, free), Jernade Meade (Arsenal, free).

OUT

Mark Gower (Charlton, free), Kyle Bartley (Birmingham, loan), Alan Tate (Yeovil, loan).

THE BOSS

Michael Laudrup

Born: Frederiksberg, Denmark

Age: 49

Joined: 2012

Hons: Danish Superliga, Danish Cup, Danish Supercup (Brondby); League Cup (Swansea)

BETTING

The Swans are 4-1 ON (Stan James) to finish above fellow Welsh side Cardiff .

STOKE CITY

Formed	1863
Manager	Mark Hughes
Ground	Britannia Stadium
Capacity	27,740
Nickname	The Potters
Website	www.stokecityfc.com

SUMMER MOVES

IN

Erik Pieters (PSV Eindhoven, £3m), Alex Grant (Portsmouth, free), Marc Muniesa (Barcelona, free).

OUT

Dean Whitehead (Middlesbrough, free), Rory Delap (Burton, free), Matthew Upson (Brighton, free), Mamady Sidibe (free), Jermaine Pennant (released), Michael Owen (retired).

THE BOSS

Mark Hughes

Born: Wrexham

Age: 49

Joined: May 2013

Hons: None

BETTING

Stoke are 3-1 (Stan James) to finish as the best of the Midlands clubs.

Laudrup rides out the choppy seas of summer

By Andrew Gwilym

THE close season has never proved to be a simple time for Swansea, and this summer proved to be no different.

Things should have been straightforward. The Capital One Cup was securely locked away in the Liberty Stadium trophy cabinet, and a top-half Premier League finish had been claimed.

There was European competition to look forward to and the chance to strengthen with manager Michael Laudrup and star man Michu tied to extended contracts.

But the Swans board know only too well what can become of best-laid plans.

Recent summers have seen Roberto Martinez, Paulo Sousa, Brendan Rodgers, Joe Allen and Scott Sinclair disappear through the exit door despite the club's upward trajectory.

And there were fears Laudrup would follow suit after a disagreement over the approach to bolstering the squad. The row got to the point where Swansea simply refused to deal with Laudrup's agent Bayram Tutumlu, a considerable risk given the pair's 20-year working relationship. Both club and manager consistently stated the Dane would be in charge come the start of the campaign, but it is fair to say plenty of the club's supporters will have breathed a sigh of relief to see Laudrup in the dug-out for the Europa League clash with Malmo.

Laudrup, for his part, appears to have been unfazed by the speculation over his future. "I never thought I would not be here this season," he said.

"As you can see, I'm here and I can promise you I will be sitting by the side of the pitch when the season starts.

"We all know that in football things change – that in one month things alter and you move on. It doesn't mean that everything that happened in the past month, or six months, doesn't mean anything. But in the world of football we have to live in the present.

"If you start to think what happened before, or what may happen in the future, then you lose focus. I, and we, cannot afford to lose focus right now because it's too important for us.

"This month, more than ever, the month of August, is normally quite an easy one, with one or two games in the Premier League, then you have international week off.

"But for us, the first month of the season is a huge month – or it could be. Hopefully, we will have to play four European games, plus Manchester United and Tottenham. So, this is the most important thing."

Following Jenkins decision to jettison Tutumlu, Swansea made considerable progress in the transfer market.

Wilfried Bony (inset) became a new club-record signing as the Ivory Coast international arrived in a £12million move from Vitesse Arnhem, while £5m was spent to bring in Jonjo Shelvey from Liverpool.

Jose Canas, Jordi Amat, Alejandro Pozuelo were also added to Swansea's line-up, while Jonathan de Guzman has returned for another loan spell from Villarreal.

Hughes' new broom sweeps Stoke

By Eleanor Crooks

IT'S Stoke City, but not as we know it.

Rarely has a club been so associated with one style of playing than the Potters over the five seasons they have been in the Premier League.

Long throws, rugby jokes, winding up Arsene Wenger, Stoke fans relished them all as their team defied the odds to reach an FA Cup final, Europe and stay largely out of trouble in the League.

But last season discontent grew as a terrible run saw them become briefly drawn into the battle to avoid relegation. They survived comfortably in the end but, without the appeasement of results, the lack of entertainment on show became a rod with which to beat manager Tony Pulis.

And at the end of the season chairman Peter Coates brought Pulis' seven-year reign at the Britannia Stadium to an end, replacing him with another Welshman in Mark Hughes.

The former Manchester City and QPR boss has brought in only two new players so far – defenders Erik Pieters and Marc Muniesa (right) – but it is set to be a very different Stoke that take to the field for their Premier League opener against Liverpool. Hughes immediately set about transforming Stoke's style of play, encouraging his players to keep the ball on the ground and pass out from defence, and he said: "There's a number of things we can improve on, I think that's obvious. But you can see the guys are trying to implement what we're giving to them.

"It's not easy, but I've been pleased with the application and how they've gone about it in terms of trying to make things happen.

"I've got good players and I wouldn't ask them to do anything I didn't feel they were capable of doing. The back four are all internationals, so playing out from the back shouldn't cause any problems whatsoever. I just think once we get really adept at it, which I feel we've got enough ability to do, then we'll get further up the field and we'll get more bodies around the opposition box.

"That's what I feel the way forward is. I think we'll retain possession better in the opposition half and we'll create things.

"It will take time and on occasions we'll make mistakes, I think we have to accept that, but if we want to play in a certain way then that's what we have to do.

"The only way we'll improve is by playing games and understanding what you can and can't do in certain areas of the field. In the long term we'll be a better team I hope."

Hughes is also encouraged by the attitude of the fans, saying: "Every time we had a good passage of play you sensed the crowd was really encouraged by that and that's the way they want us to play."

Hughton develops survival instinct

By Jim van Wijk

NORWICH CITY may have smashed their transfer record as part of an unprecedented £20million summer spending spree, but for Chris Hughton there remains only one target – survival at all costs.

The Canaries have not been slow to take a massive dent out of the new bumper television income, with £8m Dutch forward Ricky van Wolfswinkel one of half a dozen new arrivals so far.

After watching his side eventually drag themselves towards safety and 11th place last season – having earlier looked well on course with a superb 10-match unbeaten run midway through the campaign – Hughton accepts the Norfolk club's focus must always be on staying clear of that nerve-shredding relegation dogfight.

"We are still a club that is developing," he said. "We have had two very good years in this division, but this season – irrespective of what we have brought in – will start just as hard as last season started.

"It is still making sure we start next season's Premier League in the division. That is always the objective, but we want to make progress."

It was a distinct lack of cutting edge in attack last season – club captain Grant Holt managed only eight goals before leaving for Wigan in the summer – which saw Hughton move to bring in plenty of other forward potential as well as spending big on Sporting Lisbon marksman Van Wolfswinkel.

Gary Hooper arrived from Celtic – having been close to a move during the January transfer window for what would have been a lot more than the £5m fee paid – along with England Under-21 winger Nathan Redmond, both of whom should help provide a much-needed threat in the final third to assist the likes of Republic of Ireland winger Anthony Pilkington, Scotland's Robert Snodgrass and playmaker Wes Hoolahan.

Midfield has also been reinforced with the signing of 6ft 2in Dutch international Leroy Fer – nicknamed The Bouncer – from FC Twente, while experienced Sweden full-back Martin Olsson joined from Blackburn and defender Javier Garrido signed permanently after an impressive loan from Lazio.

Norwich managed to fend off Chelsea's interest in fit-again England goalkeeper John Ruddy, who was sorely missed when a thigh injury ruled him out for the best part of four months, but he alone cannot be expected to shore up a leaky backline which conceded 58 goals.

While Hughton may well yet bring in support for centre-half Sebastien Bassong, it will ultimately be at the other end of the pitch that Norwich's Premier League destiny will be played out.

Van Wolfswinkel, though, has no doubt he can be the man to fire the Canaries towards looking up the table rather than always over their shoulders.

"I am confident of scoring goals. That is part and parcel of my job," said the 24-year-old former Vitesse and Utrecht forward.

"If I play well then I expect to score goals and I want to do both. These are my qualities that I want to show.

"I know they say the Portuguese League is more technical and the English is more physical, so I might have to make a few changes. It is normal, I had the same when I first left Holland for Portugal.

"This will be different, but I am not the type of player who needs much time to develop."

Dutch international striker Ricky van Wolfswinkel expects to solve Norwich's problems in front of goal

NORWICH CITY

Formed	1902
Manager	Chris Hughton
Ground	Carrow Road
Capacity	27,250
Nickname	The Canaries
Website	www.canaries.co.uk

SUMMER MOVES

IN

Ricky van Wolfswinkel (Sporting Lisbon, £8.5m), Gary Hooper (Celtic, £5m), Leroy Fer (FC Twente, £4.5m), Martin Olsson (Blackburn, £2.5m), Nathan Redmond (Birmingham, £2.2m), Javier Garrido (Lazio, £1.275m), Carlo Nash (Stoke, free).

OUT

Grant Holt (Wigan, £2m), James Vaughan (Huddersfield, £1m), Marc Tierney (Bolton, free), Lee Camp (free), Simeon Jackson (Eintracht Braunschweig, free), Elliott Ward (Bournemouth, free), Declan Rudd (Preston, season loan), Jed Steer (Aston Villa, free), Chris Martin (Derby, free), Leon Barnett (Wigan, undisclosed).

THE BOSS

Chris Hughton
Born: Forest Gate
Age: 54
Joined: 2012
Hons: Championship (Newcastle)

BETTING

The Canaries are 11-1 (Stan James) to concede most goals this season

Sam targets flying start

Andy Carroll has made his loan move permanent

SAM ALLARDYCE wants to see his side start the new season with the same gusto that saw them settle back into top-flight football so easily a year ago.

The Hammers lost only one of their opening six Premier League games last season after Allardyce had guided them to promotion through the play-offs the season before.

A home game against newly-promoted Cardiff will usher in the new campaign for West Ham, with Stoke and Everton also visiting Upton Park in between trips to Newcastle and Southampton.

Allardyce is keen to chalk up as many points as possible in the early weeks of the season, and knows that replicating last season's home form – which saw the Hammers amass 34 of their 46 points at Upton Park – is key if his side are to improve on last year's finish in 10th place.

"The fixtures have been reasonably kind but there are no easy games in the Premier League as everybody knows," said former Bolton, Newcastle and Blackburn boss Allardyce.

"A good start for us like last season, when we got 14 points out of the first eight games, is something that we need to target yet again if we want to be as good as were last year.

"With that group of fixtures, not that I'm saying that they're easy, but if you started off with Manchester United, Chelsea, Liverpool or Manchester City in the first eight, that would be difficult. But we haven't got that to begin with and we need that strong start yet again.

"Our home form was the key to our success and our away form, in the end, wasn't very good, considering that when we got promoted the year before our away form was better than our home form. So it was quite strange from that point of view."

Four players have been signed so far, with the club shelling out a record fee to make Andy Carroll's move from Liverpool a permanent one.

Romania captain Razvan Rat joined on a free transfer while goalkeeper Adrian moved from Real Betis and young midfielder Danny Whitehead was signed from Stockport.

WEST HAM UNITED

Formed	1912
Manager	Sam Allardyce
Ground	Upton Park
Capacity	1895
Nickname	The Hammers
Website	www.whufc.co.uk

SUMMER MOVES

IN

Andy Carroll (Liverpool, £15million), Adrian (Real Betis, free), Razvan Rat (Shakhtar Donetsk, free), Danny Whitehead (Stockport, undisclosed).

OUT

Carlton Cole (released), Gary O'Neil (released), Robert Hall (Bolton, compensation fee).

THE BOSS

Sam Allardyce
Born: Dudley
Age: 58
Joined: 2011
Hons: League of Ireland Division One (Limerick); Third Division (Notts County; First Division play-offs (Bolton), Championship play-offs (West Ham)

BETTING

The Hammers are 5-4 ON (Stan James) to finish above Fulham and Crystal Palace.

Movers & shakers

Sean Taylor charts summer transfer activity in the Barclays Premier League

RARELY has a Premier League season generated so much intrigue and interest.

The wind of change has blown this summer, leaving us all on the edge of our seats in anticipation.

Last season's top three clubs, and the three once again expected to contest the title this time round, all have new managers.

It will be the first Premier League campaign without Sir Alex Ferguson after the Scot called time on 26 trophy-laden years at Manchester United with his 13th title.

David Moyes has the task of stepping into the shoes of arguably the greatest manager of all time, and certainly the best in British football history.

Across Manchester, Manuel Pellegrini is the man charged with taking City to the next level after a second-place finish and a FA Cup final defeat to relegated Wigan was not enough for Roberto Mancini to keep his job.

Then, of course, there is the return of Jose Mourinho at Chelsea.

All three are under pressure to deliver, but no-one more than Moyes. After a decade of over-achieving at Everton, he is now expected to deliver silverware.

Much will depend on the transfer market. United, where Ferguson's departure followed that of the influential David Gill, have so far struggled to attract new players.

Thiago Alcantara opted to sign for European champions Bayern Munich while the club's public pursuit of Cesc Fabregas continues.

Just as public is Chelsea's courting of Wayne Rooney. Moyes insists the disgruntled striker is not for sale, but the speculation rumbles on.

After signing forward Andre Schurrle from Bayern Leverkusen for a reported £18million, Mourinho has made Rooney his primary remaining target this summer as he looks to assemble a group of players capable of entertaining more than those who delivered back-to-back titles during his first reign at Stamford Bridge.

Meanwhile, City's reaction to failing to defend the title they won in 2012 has been to throw their considerable financial backing behind new boss Pellegrini.

Carlos Tevez has gone, but the former Malaga manager has spent close to £100m on Jesus Navas, Fernandinho, Alvaro Negredo and Stevan Jovetic. Pellegrini's teams are reknowned for playing attractive football, but much could depend on how long it takes them to gel.

While the title appears set to be contested between the Manchester clubs and Chelsea, competition for the remaining Champions League place will be as fierce as ever.

Again though, what happens in the remaining weeks of the transfer window could have a big say in who takes that fourth spot.

It was Arsenal last season and, in a rare statement of intent from Arsene Wenger, his pursuit of Liverpool striker Luis Suarez implies he is ready to try to narrow the gap between his side and the big three.

Capturing the controversial Uruguayan would severely dent Liverpool's hopes of breaking back into the top four after a promising finish to the last campaign and the useful additions this summer of Luis Alberto, Iago Aspas, Simon Mignolet and Kolo Toure.

Tottenham, fifth last season with a club-record 72 points and only three points behind third-placed Chelsea, have strengthened with Paulinho, Nacer Chadli and Roberto Soldado, and will again be in the mix – provided they keep hold of Gareth Bale, who is being hotly pursued by Real Madrid.

It will be interesting to see how Roberto Martinez gets on after succeeding Moyes at Everton. In winning the FA Cup with Wigan last season, Martinez has something that Moyes does not – a trophy under his belt – but the signings of Arouna Kone, Joel Robles and Antolin Alcaraz, who all played for him in a relegated side last season, is not likely to flood Evertonian hearts with optimism.

Inevitably, due to the financial gulf between the Championship and the Premier League, the promoted clubs will struggle, and it could prove to be a long, hard season for Cardiff – who have spent big on Steven Caulker and Denmark international striker Andreas Cornelius – Hull and Crystal Palace.

Aston Villa narrowly survived last season but should not struggle this time round after investing in the likes of Nicklas Helenius, Jores Okore, Leandro Bacuna, Aleksandar Tonev, Antonio Luna and Jed Steer. However, Paul Lambert's best piece of business this summer could prove to be persuading Christian Benteke to sign a new contract.

Arouna Kone

Jesus Navas

Iago Aspas

Antonio Luna

Andreas Cornelius

Andre Schurrle

Paulinho

Who will win TV's big battle?

ONE of the most hard-fought tussles of the season is already well under way, with Sky and BT going head-to-head in the chase for new TV subscribers.

Sky will show a record 116 live Premier League games this season, 43 of them by December 1, while newcomer BT Sport – fronted by former BBC man Jake Humphrey – will screen 38, 12 of them during that initial period.

David Moyes' first League match as Manchester United boss will kick off Sky's coverage for the season when the Red Devils visit Swansea on Saturday.

The broadcaster will also be at Stamford Bridge for Jose Mourinho's return to Chelsea against Hull the following day and at the Etihad Stadium on Monday, August 19, when Manuel Pellegrini sends out Manchester City for the first time against Newcastle. Sky has also selected Chelsea's visit to Old Trafford on Monday, August 26.

BT's schedule starts with an opening-day visit to Anfield for Liverpool v Stoke, and highlights include promoted Crystal Palace's trip to United on Saturday, September 14, Tottenham v Chelsea a fortnight later and the Merseyside derby on Saturday, November 23.

Marc Watson, BT's CEO Television, said: "We will have more first picks than Sky in the next two-thirds of the season, and if the campaign is as exciting as we think it is going to be, then we will be very happy about that."

Jake Humphrey

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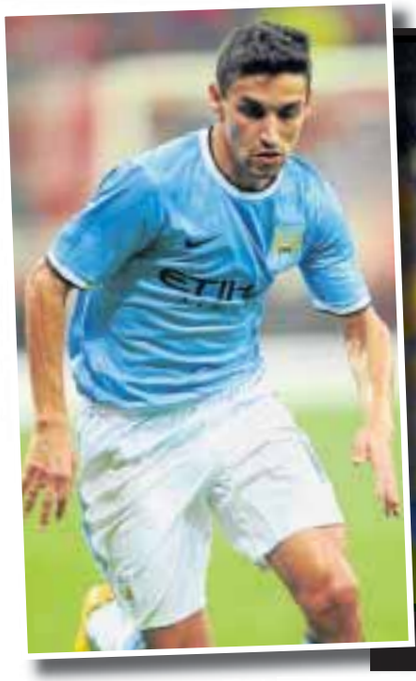

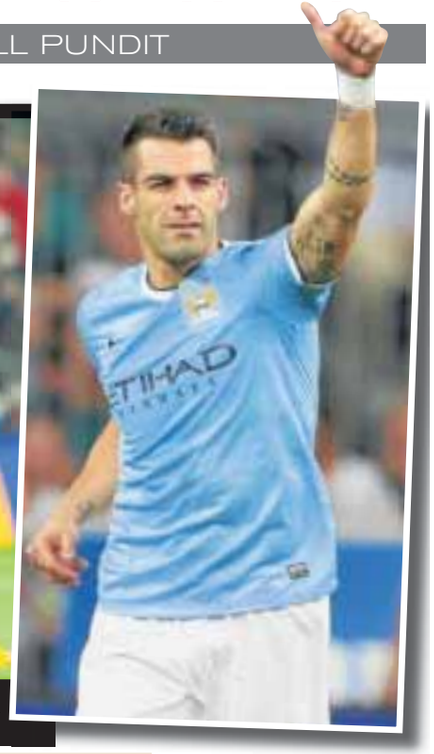

Brazilian duo Fernandinho, *centre left*, and Paulinho can light up the Premier League with Manchester City's Spanish signings Jesus Navas, *far left*, and Alvaro Negredo from Sevilla

Boys from Brazil will turn it on

THE import of this season's Spanish stars to the Premier League goes with the fashion.

When France were winning everything, a lot of their players came into the country and, because Spain have been so successful, that's why the likes of Jesus Navas, Alvaro Negredo (Manchester City), Iago Aspas, Luiz Alberto (Liverpool) and Roberto Soldado (Tottenham) are arriving.

But I'm excited about the two new Brazilians – Paulinho of Spurs, and City's Fernandinho.

I'm interested to see what team gets most value. Fernandinho, who cost £30 million, is not a regular in the Brazil team whereas Paulinho is and cost £17m.

Those two players will be vying for the same midfield spot in next year's World Cup, so whoever has the best season will probably start next summer.

Navas and Negredo, too, have cost £35m between them and are also not in the starting Spanish XI, alongside £26m Soldado.

I like Navas, though. He's an old-school winger. He runs at people at real pace, crosses on the run and he was at Sevilla with Negredo, so they'll have a good relationship.

Negredo is strong in the air and, with good service out wide, will be formidable, as will Eden Dzeko. Width is something City have lacked, so I think we're going to see a different City team under Manuel Pellegrini. It's hard to say, though, if their spending will give them the edge. A lot of clubs still haven't done their business.

People ask me 'who do you think will win the title' but you have to reserve judgment until after the transfer window.

Who is to say if Gareth Bale goes to Real Madrid and Manchester United bring back Cristiano Ronaldo?

United are going to buy an A-list player. Who it is we don't know yet, but it is a fact. When they signed Robin van Persie last season, the title was won then.

But this year it's so difficult to split the teams and that's what makes it so thrilling. You can't help but be excited by the return of Jose Mourinho at Chelsea. If he brings in a top-class striker then I would have them down to win the title.

He's box office. He seems more subdued since the last time he was here.. maybe he's wounded after falling out with players at Real Madrid.

The landscape in the Premier League has changed from when he used to have battles with Sir Alex Ferguson, but David Moyes is a spiky character – always has been – and could have some run-ins with Mourinho.

It will remain pretty calm to begin with, but that may change with the Wayne Rooney transfer saga! It used to be the same with Arsene Wenger, but I don't think Mourinho looks at him as a rival any more.

Wenger said recently his current Arsenal squad can win the title. No it can't. It could get into the top four because he does it every year.

If they were to land Luis Suarez and one or two others then, absolutely, they could challenge.

They are trying to sign the big-name players, it's not for the want of trying. But if they don't land the Uruguayan, Arsenal can't just rely on what they have, because the year will come when they don't make the top four.

Tottenham's chances depend on Bale's future.. they were a one-man team at times last season. He was scoring last-minute goals from 25 yards, it was incredible what he was doing, but Tottenham will evolve whatever Bale does.

Nacer Chadli is one to watch. He has been keeping Mousa Dembele out of the Belgium team, which shows what a good player he is.

Wilfred Bony is a great signing for Swansea, who can make big strides again. He reminds me of Yakubu – that ice-cold ability to relax in front of goal.

For Liverpool, as much as I would love to see Suarez stay, I think he'll move on. But it's important Liverpool don't wait. If you can get £50m for him then do it now so you have time to reinvest. It's the same with Bale.

I wouldn't write off the promoted teams. Cardiff have spent money and are near to capturing Etienne Capoue, who is a great player – dad tried to sign him for Spurs.

From Cardiff, Hull and Crystal Palace's point of view, it's all about finishing 17th.

The Premier League will not be as tough as they thought, but it is so important you don't concede late goals, as Reading and QPR did too many times. Palace losing Wilfried Zaha is a big loss, but I liked the look of winger Yannick Bolasie in the play-off semi-final and captain Mile Jedinak is a really strong player.

Aston Villa had a boost in keeping Christian Benteke, but I don't see them troubling the top 10. Stoke may find it difficult, too, but like I said, it's not until everyone has their squads in place that you can make a judgment.

■ *Jamie was talking to Lenny Miller*

Don't miss Carra and Neville act!

MY old Liverpool team-mate Jamie Carragher, *inset*, will be joining Gary Neville on Monday Night Football this season and the coverage will be very interesting.

There was not a lot of love lost when those two were playing against each other, but then again I don't think anyone got on well with Gary when they were playing with him!

I mean that in the lightest possible way, of course, but when we played for England together I don't think we spoke once!

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BETTING
Odds from Stan James

WINNERS

Man United	11-5
Man City	11-5
Chelsea	11-5
Arsenal	10-1
Liverpool	33-1
Tottenham	33-1
Everton	250-1
Newcastle	1000-1
West Brom	1000-1
Swansea	1000-1
Stoke	1500-1
Aston Villa	1500-1
Sunderland	1500-1
Southampton	1500-1
Fulham	1500-1
West Ham	1500-1
Norwich	2500-1
Cardiff	5000-1
Hull	5000-1
Crystal Palace	5000-1

TOP FOUR FINISH

Chelsea	1-14
Man City	1-14
Man United	1-14
Arsenal	4-6
Tottenham	7-4
Liverpool	2-1

TO BE RELEGATED

Crystal Palace	4-9
Hull	8-13
Cardiff	11-8
Stoke	11-4
Norwich	3-1
Sunderland	11-2
Aston Villa	6-1
Fulham	6-1

Blue is the colour for title glory

BETTING by Mark Tattersall

EXPECT to see blue ribbons on the Premier League trophy at the end of the season. The only question is which shade they will be.

Stan James cannot separate last season's top three, rating Manchester United, Manchester City and Chelsea all as 11-5 chances.

All three are under new management, and it is defending champions United who seem most likely to start on the back foot.

David Moyes, already saddled with the pressure of succeeding Sir Alex Ferguson and with a rather slimmer CV than either Manuel Pellegrini or Jose Mourinho, has also been left standing in the transfer market.

Wilfried Zaha, secured last season, is the only major new face so far, while City and Chelsea have had rather more turnover in their respective dressing rooms.

Chelsea's failing last season was a woeful attacking roster, but with Demba Ba now available for all competitions, Romelu Lukaku and Kevin de Bruyne back from successful loan spells, and Andre Schurrle imported from Bayer Leverkusen, they look far more potent – and less reliant on Fernando Torres, which amounts to the same thing. Add Dutch youngster Marco van Ginkel to an already formidable midfield, and Mourinho has the tools he needs for a successful second coming.

City fans have even more cause for anticipation with four recruits of real quality in Shakhtar Donetsk and Brazil midfielder Fernandinho, Montenegrin striker Stevan Jovetic from Fiorentina and Sevilla and Spain pair Jesus Navas and Alvaro Negredo. And we can assume Pellegrini will be a less flaky leader than Roberto Mancini.

It promises to be a thrilling head-to-head, but the proven ability of City's new faces should tip the balance and mean the lighter blue ribbons will be employed next May.

Fourth is reckoned to be the new first, and Arsenal are odds-on to take the last Champions League qualifying spot, which looks about right. Tottenham will hope to challenge their London rivals again, but the 7-4 on them finishing in the top four will lengthen dramatically if they lose Gareth Bale.

At the bottom, it is traditional to expect the three promoted teams to go back down again, but Cardiff look best-placed to avoid that fate, with Norwich (3-1) most likely to accompany Crystal Palace and Hull City.

Brazil midfielder Fernandinho is among a host of star signings made by Manchester City

Holloway's tough task

By Rory Jiwani of Stan James

THE battle to avoid relegation from the Premier League will be as keenly contested as ever with Crystal Palace fancied to make a swift return to the Championship.

Ian Holloway's men are just 4-9 to go down and 9-4 to finish bottom, which has been a popular bet this summer. Hull are 8-13 to be relegated with the other promoted side, Cardiff, 11-8 to return to the second tier.

Paolo Di Canio steered Sunderland to safety last season, but punters are not keen on the Wearsiders extending their stay in the top flight as they have been backed at 5-1 for the drop.

Norwich are favourites for relegation outside of the promoted clubs and our quote of 3-1 has been taken, along with our 8-1 about West Brom slipping out of the top flight.

Newcastle endured a torrid end to last season and the appointment of Joe Kinnear as the club's director of football has seemingly made Alan Pardew's job less secure. He's our 5-2 favourite to be the first Premier League boss to leave his post.

Meanwhile, Jose's Chelsea have been well backed to win the title and now share favouritism with champions Manchester United and Manchester City at 11-5.

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Spacious 4 berth, 2 belts, French bed, tow bar	£26,650
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16ft 5", 2 berths, 3 belts, bathroom, 28,000 miles, bike rack	£23,750
2005 Autocruise Gleneagle	
2 berth 2 belts, Pull Out Bed, Safari Room Rev Camera	£23,450
2003 Autotrail Cheyanne	
French Bed, 5 berth, 2 belts, charming, 11,500 miles	£22,500
2002 Autosleepers Palermo 5 berth,	
French bed overhead cab 5,000 miles	£22,950
2004 Bessacarr E450 2 berth	
French bed, sat system 37,200 miles	£20,995
2005 Trigano Tribute Van Conversion	
2 berth, 3 belts, 18ft 4" long, bathroom	£20,750
2004 McLouis Glen 430,	
24,000 miles, 20ft 2" long, 6 berths, overhead cab, rear bunk beds	£18,950
1997 Swift Suntor 500 4 berth	
rear lounge 56,260 miles	£13,995
2003 Carravagio Van Conversion	
2 berth, 3 belts, Awning and Windblock	Reduced to £12,750
1999 Autosleepers Symphony Van,	
2 berths, 3 belts, bathroom, tow hook, bike rack, 34,000 miles	£12,500
1992 Autotrail Cree	
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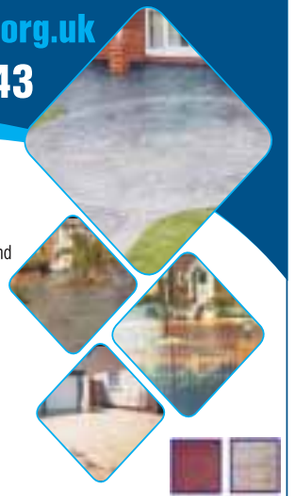

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Local Cricket Spotlight

Academy duo in lead

AGEAS Bowl International Academy pair Travis Head and Alex Keath lead the way in the Southern Electric Premier League inividual performance charts.

South Australia left-hander Head has made 706 runs for Ventnor, while Victoria's Keath, in addition to scoring 578 runs, is top wicket-taker with 29 victims.

Leading performances - Premier Division

Batting: * Travis Head (Ventnor) 706, Oli Mills (Ventnor) 652, Rob Gibson (Havant) 587, * Alex Keath (Bournemouth) 578, James Taylor (Totton & Eling) 536, Lewis McManus (Academy) 526.

Bowling: *Alex Keath (Bournemouth) 29, Matt Metcalfe (Lymington) 27, Jordan Finney (St Cross Symondians) 27, Rob Franklin (South Wilts) 24, James Hibberd (South Wilts) 23, Kevin Nash (Bashley Rydal) 23, Richard Logan (St Cross Symondians) 23, Darren Cowley (Lymington) 22.

Wicketkeeping: Tom Morton (South Wilts) 23, Lewis McManus (Academy) 20, Ed Ellis (Lymington) 19, Tom Arnold (Totton) 19, Adam Rouse (St Cross Symondians) 17.

Division 1

Batting: Shu Chowdhury (Burridge) 618, Derek Kenway (Burridge) 574, Jamie Richards (Liphook) 529, Scott Baldwin (HW) 510, Ben Thane (Hook & NB) 499, Nick Park (New Milton) 499.

Bowling: * Geoff Dods (Burridge) 32, Ryan Covey (Liphook) 23, James Ingram (Sarisbury Athletic) 23, * Matt Willett (Rowledge) 23, Charles Janczur (Liphook) 22, Glen Williams (HNB) 21, George Watts (New Milton) 21.

Wicketkeeping: Tom Prodomo (New Milton) 27, Jamie Rood (Burridge) 21, Ian Metcalfe (Rowledge) 20.

Division 2

Batting: * Jamie Eccles (Hursley Park) 650, * Dan Payne (Sparsholt) 648, Dan Coombs (Basingstoke) 547, Graham Noble (Langley Manor) 490, Azeem Hamid (Totton II) 470, Stewart Magee (Paultons) 463.

Bowling: Matt Oliver (Hursley Park) 28, Matthew Thankachan (Basingstoke) 27, Dave Cox (US) 25, Mike West (Calmore) 24, Mark Lavelle (Calmore) 24, David Pistrous (Basingstoke) 24, * Elijah Turriff-Smith (Calmore) 24, * Caleb Brookland (Langley Manor)

Wicketkeeping: Lee Carroll (US) 23, Matt Branford (Hursley Park) 19, Lawrence Benge (Basingstoke) 17.

Division 3

Batting: Andy Galliers (Havant II) 457, Matt Benfield (P & S) 427, Robert Jones (Portsmouth) 398, Tom Pearce (SW) 390, Tom Cowley (SW) 386, Jamie Mitchell (Portsmouth) 370, Tom Hockenhull (Fair Oak) 367, Dave Henderson (Portsmouth) 364, Ed Boyd (Trojans) 362.

Bowling: Vikram Dawson (Portsmouth) 36, Phil Loat (Havant II) 31, * Liam Duffield (Portsmouth) 31, Andy Mash (Fair Oak) 30, Steve Mitchell (St Cross II) 30, Paul Draper (SW) 27, James Rapson (Bashley Rydal II) 25.

Wicketkeeping: Alex Hammond (Portsmouth) 19, Sam Pittman (SW) 13, Alex Bass (Fair Oak) 13, Nigel le Bas (Trojans) 11, Chris Gates (Bashley Rydal II) 10.

JANET Rogers (right) created local cricket history last weekend when she became the first lady umpire to officiate an ECB Southern Electric Premier League fixture. She stood with John Attirdge (left) in the Alton-South Wilts match at the Jubilee Ground.

It may have been her first match on Hampshire soil, but Janet is a regular umpire in the top Middlesex and Surrey club circuit, besides officiating women's international matches.

Ryan has the edge

COMPETITIVE: Ryan Higgins. Picture: Terry Nash.

BASHLEY (Rydal) captain Richard Morris believes Ryan Higgins's competitive streak will serve him well as he tries to forge a career in the professional game.

Higgins, who was brought to Bashley by Morris last season, made his England debut in the under-19 triangular series against Pakistan and Bangladesh this week. He made 45 in the defeat by Bangladesh at Sleaford *writes MIKE VIMPANY.*

The 18-year-old all-rounder is attached to Middlesex and recently scored his maiden Second XI Championship century in a victory over Essex.

Higgins, who has the rare talent of being able to bowl fast and spin, was raised in Zimbabwe but came to England as a 14-year old.

"Ryan is a very talented young man and, to be honest, I don't think we have quite seen the best of him yet because he has spent a fair bit of time at school," said Morris.

"I am convinced he is going to have a long career in the game. He is a particularly good batter but he has got a competitive streak which I think will serve him well as he goes through the levels.

"It is a pretty good achievement for an 18-year-old to score a hundred for Middlesex seconds and he looked in good touch when he batted for us against the Academy."

Higgins, who recently left Bradfield College after A-levels, has a fiery side to his character .

Morris added: "He is pretty fiery and I don't think we are ever going to change him but I have got no problem as long as he meets my expectations and channels it in the right way.

"He is just competitive. He has worked hard at his studies and has made a decision that cricket is the career he wants to pursue.

"It is almost a case of tunnel vision – the goal is there and he has got to find a way to achieve it.

"Anybody who may try to knock him off course is a bit of a disruption.

"People have to remember he is still a young lad who has almost been thrown in at the deep end with us and, hopefully, we are going to see the results coming through pretty soon."

Bosisto bounces back

COMEBACK: Will Bosisto. Picture: Terry Nash.

WESTERN Australia's Will Bosisto made a long awaited return to Totton & Eling's ranks at Bournemouth this afternoon.

He has been sidelined for the past two months after suffering ankle ligament damage while bowling his off-spin in an ECB Southern Electric Premier League match at Havant.

"It put me out of commission for nine matches – not quite what was planned when I arrived, here," he reflected.

Bosisto, 19, is one of the promising youngsters selected by Cricket Australia for the Ageas Bowl International Academy.

He captained Australia in last year's ICC Under-19 CWC final and made an unbeaten 87 against India, the tournament winners.

He said: "Things had been going pretty well up until my injury. I'd scored 300-odd runs in five knocks and taken a few wickets, but then ..."

The accident at Havant couldn't have happened at a worse time.

"My parents had just arrived on holiday from Perth and, after watching me bat, the next they saw was me being carried off and sitting on the Havant pavilion steps with my foot in a bucket of ice water," he added.

"I think the ligament damage was pretty serious – a clean ankle break would have been preferable for recovery purposes – and I spent three weeks hobbling about in one of those Moon boots.

"But since I had the boot removed, I've been able to do weight bearing training and then general fitness work and thanks to Hampshire's medical and fitness guys I've got myself fit and, in recent weeks, have been getting in the nets," he continued.

Bosisto said there was no likelihood of him returning home to Western Australia.

"I'd kept the WACA in the loop about what was going on and they were very happy indeed with the specialist treatment I was getting at the Ageas Bowl, so there was no point.

"I'd targeted a mid-August return to the middle and look forward to finishing the season at Totton & Eling."

Bosisto, who has a rookie contract with WA, had his first knock in nine weeks when he played for the MCC against Chichester Priory Park in midweek.

"I made 30 or so, but the main object of the exercise was to ensure I could bat properly, move about in the crease and run.

"I'm gad to say it went well," he smiled.

Totton certainly needed Bosisto back. Prior to today's visit to Bournemouth they had gone six weeks without a win and were in need of some top order batting stability.

Bosisto was set to face Victoria's Alex Keath, his Ageas Bowl Academy stable-mate in the Chapel Gate match.

■ South Wilts must beat reigning ECB t20 Club champions Wimbledon at the HSBC ground, Beckenham tomorrow if they are to progress towards next month's final at the KIA Oval.

■ If they win tomorrow's second semi-final, they will face either Blackheath or Horsham in the South final.

■ Harry Anstee became the first Bashley (Rydal) cricketer to make a double-century when he hit an unbeaten 201 against Hampshire League Regional 3 South West rivals Hythe & Dibden last weekend.

■ Anstee struck five sixes and 31 fours in his double hundred as Bashley totalled 322-7 before dismissing Hythe for 224, Gareth Mead hitting 96.

Local Cricket Spotlight

Hants miss out on last eight

HAMPSHIRE Under-15s missed out on a quarter-final spot in the ECB County Cup after finishing third in their group, with four wins from seven completed matches.

They were the only side to defeat group winners Berkshire, but losing to the Thames Valley county in their penultimate match proved costly.

"We are disappointed not to have made the quarter-finals, but the table does not lie," said manager Max Smith. "We scored lots of runs with nine batsmen making 15 separate 50s, Havant's Harry Hovey making four of them and Michael Haworth (St Cross Symondians) a century against Wiltshire.

"The bowling was good at times but lacked consistency with only one five-wicket haul from Ollie Perrin, four-fers Robbie Pitts-Melan and Josh McCoy.

"There is lots of potential in this group and if it is realised with ball as well as bat then they are a match for anyone."

Results:

Hampshire 172-9 (Hovey 63, Theobald 38) Somerset 173-2. Somerset won by 8 wickets.

Hampshire 251 (Hovey 72, Bass 56) Devon 138 (Perrin 3-23). Hampshire won by 113 runs.

Buckinghamshire 292-8 (Zabib 92, Buckeridge 3-26) Hampshire 234 (McCoy 57, Buckeridge 47, Thompson 46). Buckinghamshire won by 58 runs.

Hampshire 261-8 (Bass 64*, Hovey 63, Culmer 55) Berkshire 146 (Theobald 3-12). Hampshire won by 115 runs.

Somerset 150 (McCoy 4-33) Hampshire 151-4 (Johns 98). Hampshire won by 6 wickets.

Berkshire 254-7 Hampshire 247-7 (Johns 75, McCoy 60, Hovey 37). Berkshire won by three wickets.

Hampshire 261-6 (Bernie 54, Caldera 53) Devon 216 (Perrin 5-43). Hampshire won by 45 runs.

Table

	P	w	l	can	Pts
Berkshire	8	6	1	1	25
Buckinghamshire	8	4	3	1	17
Hampshire	8	4	3	1	17
Somerset	8	3	5	0	12
Devon	8	1	6	1	5

Hampshire Under-15s: Standing (left-right): Jadon Buckeridge, Robbie Pitts-Melan, Rob Pike, Josh McCoy, Ollie Perrin, Kieran Thompson. Seated: Joe Theobald, Oscar Birnie, Tom Fay, Harry Hovey, Ben Caldera, Simon Culmer.

Fetch the rule book!

HAMPSHIRE Cricket League bosses have been studying the rule book small print in case the County Division 1 title battle between Ellingham and Waterlooville finishes in a dead heat.

With four matches to go, including today's round 14 fixtures, the pair were neck and neck at the top – with nothing in it between them, ***writes MIKE VIMPANY.***.

Leading up to today, they had each won all 11 matches, having chalked up a total of 253 points at an average of 23 points per match.

Normally where teams are level on points average, the final league position is determined by the result of the match between the two sides.

But in the case of Ellingham and Waterlooville, their early season meeting at Rowlands Avenue was abandoned by rain!

So, if the situation remains the same at close of play in four weeks' time on August 31, when the league seasons ends, the title will be decided in favour of the team which has taken the most number of wickets!

Should that happen – and let's face it, it's a little unlikely – Waterlooville will be celebrating.

Prior to their home match with Hook & Newnham Basics II today, they had taken 108 wickets, compared with Ellingham's 96.

Only Ventnor II have not been bowled out by the Ville this season, while, four times in their 11 wins, Ellingham have not dismissed their opponents.

COUNTY DIVISION 1

	P	W	L	Tot	Ave
Ellingham	11	11	0	253	23.00
Waterlooville	11	11	0	253	23.00
Alton II	9	7	2	176	19.56
Ventnor II	10	6	4	167	16.70
Portchester	12	7	5	184	15.33
* Locks Heath	11	6	5	168	15.27
Ryde	13	7	6	198	15.23
* Gosport Borough	11	6	5	162	14.73
+ Hook & N Basics II	13	6	6	184	14.15
Lymington II	11	5	6	152	13.82
Shrewton	11	5	6	149	13.55
St Cross Syms III	13	5	8	174	13.38
Fareham & Crofton	13	4	9	154	11.85
Purbrook	12	4	8	136	11.33
+ Rowledge II	11	3	7	122	11.09
Midhurst	12	3	9	128	10.67
* Old Basing	11	3	8	110	10.00
* Easton & Martyr W	11	3	8	104	9.45

The lead pair both entered the home straight with emphatic wins – Ellingham by 180 runs at Midhurst, and the Ville by an eight-wicket margin at Old Basing.

Mark Burrett hit an unbeaten 114 as Ellingham piled up 283-7 (Aaron Barker 72) and then skittled relegation haunted Midhurst for 103.

Brett Spicer (4-17) and Ben Gorham (4-34) shared eight of the wickets – Midhurst slipping five points behind the safety rung as a result of the defeat.

South African Byron Haycock, who made 114, and Max Goddard shone as Waterlooville chased down Old Basing's 204 all out to win by eight wickets.

Haycock's unbeaten 114 was his fourth County 1 century and takes him to within a hundred of an amazing 1,000 league runs for the season.

Has anyone made the magical 1,000 runs in a Hampshire League season before?

BYRON HAYCOCK

Third-placed Alton II won by a 177-run margin at Fareham & Crofton, who are sliding into relegation trouble.

Howard Gadsby (90) underpinned Alton's formidable 283-8, enjoying fruitful partnerships with Mike Salmon (44) and Brad Kneebone 34*).

Danny Durant took a season's best 4-41 for Fareham, whose batting fell apart against Lee Partner (3-35) and Tom Paul (3-20).

All out for 106, Fareham faced a critical visit to Rowledge II today.

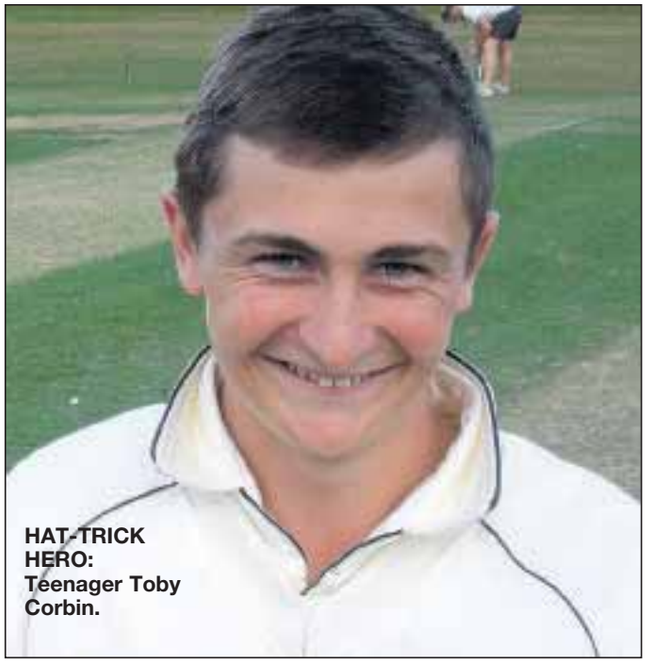
Teenager Toby Corbin, pictured, celebrated a hat-trick as fourth-placed Ventnor II held off a gallant attempt by Keith Lovelock to secure a win for Hook & Newnham Basics at the KGV Ground.

Five down, Ventnor were in early trouble, but Martin Blackman (68) found reliable late support from Mark Fletcher (34), Mark Whyte (29) and Dave Beven (23) to take the Islanders to 232.

Kevin Light (47) and Kish Parmar (36) steered HNB into a strong position but, after leg spinner Beven (3-29) had chipped away, 17-year old Corbin came on and celebrated the first hat-trick of his life.

He trapped Hampshire Seniors star Barry Goodman and Will Buckingham leg before and then clean bowled Colin Lye to finish with 3-37.

Keith Lovelock (51) made a typically defiant effort to swing the game, but Hook were dismissed for 212 – with three overs left !



HAT-TRICK HERO: Teenager Toby Corbin.

Portchester's Richard Locke was the highest CD1 run-maker of the day, hitting an unbeaten 141 to guide his side to 240-9.

But it wasn't enough to prevent resurgent Purbrook winning by three wickets and climbing out of the immediate danger zone in the process.

Aussie Jack Cunningham (91) and teenager Josh McCoy (64) hit back as Purbrook grabbed a third straight win.

St Cross Symondians III's 'extras' disease appears to be spreading and, after Locks Heath's visit to the Green Jackets Ground, it seems to be contagious.

Instead of St Cross who conceded wides and extras – 50 each week is the norm for Tom Postle's side – the Locks Heath bowlers sprayed the ball everywhere – and made victory easy for the Winchester side.

Mike Boyd (43), Ryan Smith (25), Jack Paskins (25) and Jack Levy (25) helped Locks Heath to 197 (Brad Aldridge 3-55).

St Cross creamed off the target in the 34th over – James Burridge hitting 91 not out in between LH giving away 55 extras.

St Cross won by six wickets and are now nicely positioned in mid-table.

Stuart Cruse celebrated his first century of the season as Shrewton beat Easton & Martyr Worthy by 52 runs to give their prospects of avoiding relegation from County Division 1 a massive boost.

Cruse hit 100 and, with support from Richard Barnett (30), Dan Bingley (29), Chris Brewer (32) and latterly Marcus Jenkins (35), saw Shrewton post a formidable 283-9.

Bottom side Easton lost five cheap wickets before finishing with 251-7, Will Harries taking 3-34.

Ben Wadmore scored 111 in Ryde's victory at Lymington II, where the visitors made 235 and bowled their hosts out for 181, the evergreen Dave Griffiths (49) and Joel Sutherland (43 not out) top scoring.

Skipper Lee Harrop hit 75 not out to lead Gosport Borough to a five-wicket win over Rowledge (146-9) and leave the village side on the lip of the three-down danger zone.

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Southampton & District Social Clubs League

Time to reward a very special man

Now it's the youngsters' turn to shine

A SPECIAL award to a special man kicked off the Southampton & District Social Clubs League's annual presentation evening.

Dave O'Brien was handed a life vice-president's badge by new president Sid Hunt.

As previously reported, ill health has forced the 80-year-old to end 49 years' service on the league's management committee.

In a speech to trophy winners and guests at Woolston & District Trades & Labour Club, O'Brien, president for a staggering 29 years, called for the "younger element" to take the league forward, ***writes TIM DUNKLEY.***

Trophies were presented by the Bishopstoke Carnival Queen Holly Robertson, 17, her sister and Maid of Honour Emma Robertson, 22, and eight-year-old Junior Princess Grace Brown.

A total of 115 snooker, cribbage and pool teams based at 48 social clubs – from Sway in the west to Curdridge in the east to Mottisfont in the north – completed the 2012/13 season.

Non-proprietary clubs wishing to enter the league can contact secretary Malcolm Brooke via southamptonsocial-clubs.co.uk/

TOP MAN: Retiring league president Dave O'Brien (left) being presented with his life vice-president badge by new president Sid Hunt.

PRESENTING THE TROPHIES: Bishopstoke Carnival Queen Holly Robertson (left) Maid of Honour Emma Robertson (right) and Junior Princess Grace Brown (front). Right: Pool pairs runners-up Ryan Longhurst (left) and Drew Farminer.

PICTURES BY TIM DUNKLEY

SNOOKER PAIRS CHAMPIONS: Alex Dunkley (left) and Jordan Winbourne. Right:Totton Rec D Snooker Division 2 runners-up.

TABLES

SNOOKER

SUPER LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
C/Ford Central A	26	24	0	2	194	66	242
Churchills A	26	23	1	2	191	69	238
Eastleigh Rail C	26	18	4	4	173	87	213
Sarisbury Soc A	26	19	0	7	160	100	198
Totton Rec B	26	18	3	5	156	104	195
Park Gate RBL B	26	14	2	10	137	123	167
Park Gate RBL A	26	11	3	12	131	129	156
Ashlett Club B	25	10	4	11	119	131	143
Nursling Soc A	26	5	7	14	115	145	132
Hythe Club A	25	7	3	15	100	150	117
C/Ford Central B	25	6	2	17	91	159	105
Churchills B	24	4	4	16	88	152	100
Churchills C	25	3	1	21	82	168	89
Hedge End C	26	0	0	26	53	207	53

PREMIER

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Romsey Coms B	26	17	3	6	158	102	195
Lyndhurst WM B	26	17	3	6	149	111	186
St Denys Cons C	26	13	4	9	137	119	167
Shirley Cons A	26	12	6	8	137	119	167
Sarisbury Soc B	26	11	6	9	137	123	165
Hamble Club A	26	12	6	8	134	126	164
Netley RBL	26	13	4	9	133	123	163
Shirley Cons C	26	10	6	10	131	129	157
Romsey Coms A	26	6	11	9	123	133	146
Hamble Club B	24	10	4	10	118	122	142
Ashlett Club A	25	9	3	13	117	133	138
Ashlett Club C	26	8	4	14	118	142	138
Curdridge RBL	26	6	5	15	113	147	130
Minstead Soc C	25	0	7	18	87	163	94

DIVISION 1

	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Atherley Bowl B	26	19	7	78	52	116
Bitterne RBL A	26	17	9	78	52	112
Acorn Social B	26	16	10	77	53	109
Bitterne Cons A	26	14	12	73	57	101
Sway Social	26	16	10	66	64	98
Northam B	26	14	12	66	64	94
Bishopstoke Inst	26	13	13	65	65	91
Netley Central B	26	12	14	64	66	88
Shirley Cons D	26	12	14	63	65	87
Eastleigh WM A	26	12	14	62	66	86
Nursling Social C	26	11	15	60	70	82
Locks Heath A	26	11	15	59	71	81
Swaythling A	26	8	18	53	77	69
Woolston Soc D	26	7	19	44	86	58

DIVISION 2

	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Woolston T&L B	26	23	3	101	29	147
Totton Rec D	26	18	8	83	47	119
Woolston Soc C	25	16	9	70	55	102
Salterns WM A	25	13	12	70	55	96
Hythe Club B	26	14	12	65	63	93
Totton Cons B	26	14	12	64	66	92
Nursling Social B	25	13	12	63	62	89
Bitterne Cons C	26	13	13	60	70	86
Romsey Cons B	25	12	13	59	64	83
Woolston T&L A	23	12	11	56	59	80
Bitterne RBL C	25	11	14	56	69	78
Totton Rec C	26	9	17	54	76	72
Mottisfont	26	7	19	53	75	67
Shirley Cons E	26	3	23	32	96	38

DIVISION 3

	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Testwood WM	26	21	5	81	47	123
Bitterne RBL D	26	18	8	81	49	117
Totton Cons A	26	19	7	78	52	116
St Denys Cons B	26	19	7	78	52	116
Atherley Bowl A	26	16	10	68	62	100
Fawley RBL	25	15	10	70	55	100
Lyndhurst WM A	26	15	11	64	66	94
Exbury Club	26	14	12	66	64	94
Acorn Soc C	26	13	13	68	60	94
St Denys Cons A	26	10	16	60	68	80
Eastleigh WM C	26	8	18	55	75	71
Salterns WM B	26	7	19	54	74	68
Hedge End B	25	4	21	41	84	49
Sarisbury Soc C	26	2	24	37	93	41

CRIBBAGE

DIVISION 1

	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
St Denys Cons C	28	21	7	144	108	42
Warren Social	28	19	9	138	144	38
Woolston Social A	28	16	12	144	108	32
Totton Cons	28	16	12	135	117	32
Nursling Social A	28	16	12	134	118	32
Hythe Club A	28	15	13	129	123	30
St Denys Cons D	27	15	12	121	122	30
Soton Old Bowl	28	14	14	126	126	28
Woolston T&L	27	14	13	123	120	28
Bitterne Park A	27	12	15	122	121	24
Shirley Cons B	28	11	17	114	138	22
Chandlers Ford A	28	11	17	113	139	22
Eastleigh Rail A	27	11	16	112	131	22
Woolston Cons	28	9	19	110	142	18
Park Gate RBL	28	8	20	107	145	16

DIVISION 2

	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Holy Family	26	15	11	123	111	30
Shirley Cons A	26	15	11	120	114	30
Salterns WM A	26	14	12	127	107	28
Nursling Social B	26	14	12	120	114	28
Totton Rec B	26	13	13	124	110	26
Acorn Social B	26	13	13	113	121	26
Bitterne Park B	25	13	12	105	120	26
Acorn Social A	24	11	13	109	107	22
Salterns WM B	25	9	16	102	123	18
St Denys Cons B	18	7	11	73	89	14

DIVISION 3

	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Freemantle	27	18	9	135	108	36
Riverside Club	27	17	10	129	114	34
Bitterne RBL	27	16	11	133	110	32
Totton Rec A	27	15	12	126	117	30
Bitterne Park C	27	13	14	121	122	26
Soton RBL A	27	13	14	117	122	26
Soton RBL B	27	12	15	122	121	24
Ford Sports	27	12	15	113	130	24
Woolston Soc B	27	11	16	102	137	22
Eastleigh Rail B	27	8	19	113	130	16

POOL

DIVISION 1

	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Warren Social A	20	17	3	64	34	34
Romsey Coms A	20	16	4	69	31	32
Riverside Club	20	13	7	57	41	26
Woolston T&L	19	13	6	56	33	26
Bitterne RBL	20	12	8	55	45	24
Hedge End A	20	9	11	50	50	18
Paultons CC	20	9	11	48	52	18
Soton Old Bowl	19	9	10	45	50	18
Hedge End B	20	7	13	46	52	14
Romsey Coms B	20	3	17	21	71	6
Testwood WM	20	1	19	20	72	2

annual presentation evening...

WINNER: Pool champion Richard Staines, left. Above left: poker pairs champions Andy Brooke (left) and Chris Holland, above right: poker pairs runners-up Dave Neary (left) and Ricky Everson.

TOP POTTER: Jordan Winbourne, above, highest snooker break of 136. Left: Sway cribbage team KO runners-up.

Left: Cribbage pairs runners-up Brian Stubbs (left) and Ron Davidson, centre pool pairs champions Richard Staines (left) and Pete Munday, right: Warren Social Cribbage Division 1 runners-up.

LEFT: Cribbage pairs champions Ray Ferguson (left) and Barry Cutler, centre: cribbage champion Eugene McWilliams, right: Snooker Town Championship runner-up Mike Finn (left) and first-time winner Billy Castle.

ROLL OF HONOUR 2012/13

SNOOKER

The Colbournes Trophy, Super League champions: Chandlers Ford Central A.
The Committee Cup, Super League runners-up: Churchills A.
New Wessex Cup, Premier champions: Romsey Comrades B.
Wessex Cup, Premier runners-up: Lyndhurst Workmens B.
Purkiss Cup, Division 1 champions: Atherley Bowl B.
Richards Trophy, Division 1 runners-up: Bitterne RBL A.
Mitchell Cup, Division 2 champions: Woolston T&L B.
Woolston Conservatives Trophy, Division 2 runners-up: Totton Rec D.
Catteral Cup, Division 3 champions: Testwood WMC.
P O'Brien Trophy, Division 3 runners-up: Bitterne RBL D.
Burroughes & Watts Shield, team KO champions: Eastleigh Railway Institute C.
Stan Fray Trophy, team KO runners-up: Romsey Comrades B.
Peter Marchi Cup, team KO champions: Sway Social.
AE Aldridge Cup, team KO runners-up: Totton Rec D.
Badger Shield, pairs champions: Alex Dunkley & Jordan Winbourne (Sarisbury Social).
Pairs runners-up: Mark McLean & Nick Jennings (Churchills).
Frank Mintrum Cup, individual champion: Billy Castle (Churchills).
Individual runner-up: Mike Finn (Churchills).
Sid Hunt Cup, Super League high break: Jordan Winbourne (Sarisbury Social A) 136.
D O'Brien Trophy, Premier high break: Ryan Longhurst (Romsey Comrades B) 100.
Division 1 high break: Ben Tanner (Eastleigh WM A) 91.
Division 2 high break: Paul Naismith (Woolston T&L B) 58.
Division 3 high break: Graham George (Eastleigh WM C) 43.
Dibden Cup, Divisions 1-3 high break: Ben Tanner (Eastleigh WM A) 91.
KO high break: Billy Castle (Churchills A) 103.

CRIBBAGE

Martin Cup, Division 1 champions: St Denys Cons C.
Cook Trophy, Division 1 runners-up: Warren Social.
Ex-Servicemen's Cup, Division 2 champions: Holy Family.
Bitterne Conservative Trophy, Division 2 runners-up: Shirley Cons A.
Courage & Barclay Trophy, Division 3 champions: Freemantle Social.
Farminer Trophy, Division 3 runners-up: Riverside Club.
HG Simonds Cup, team KO champions: Bitterne Park WMC A.
Hudson Trophy, team KO runners-up: Sway Social.
Malcolm Brooke Salver, team KO champions: Acorn Social A.
Mike Griffiths Salver, team KO runners-up: Holy Family.
Mew Langton Cup, pairs champions: Barry Cutler & Ray Ferguson (Nursling Social).
Pairs runners-up: Ron Davidson & Brian Stubbs (Warren Social).
Ted Richards Memorial Trophy, individual champion: Eugene McWilliams (Bitterne Park WMC).
Andy Brooke Salver, individual runner-up: Ray Bush (Sway Social).
Jerry Lovegrove Bowl, Champion of Champions: Bitterne Park WMC A.

POOL

D O'Brien Cup, Division 1 champions: Warren Social.
T Kitcher Cup, Division 1 runners-up: Romsey Comrades A.
E Gledhill Cup, team KO champions: Warren Social.
D Fry Cup, team KO runners-up: Southampton Old Bowl.
A Brooke Cup, pairs champions: Pete Munday & Richard Staines (Riverside Club).
T Hollins Cup, pairs runners-up: Ryan Longhurst & Drew Farminer (Romsey Comrades).
CR Rollason Cup, individual champion: Richard Staines (Riverside Club).
J Smith Cup, individual runner-up: Ryan Longhurst (Romsey Comrades).

POKER

Individual champion: Ian Moody (Freemantle Social).
Individual runner-up: Merv Allen (Totton Rec).
Pairs champions: Chris Holland & Andy Brooke (Shirley Cons).

MORE SOCIAL CLUBS LEAGUE WINNERS – SEE PAGES 36/37

Southampton & District Social Clubs League

King of the big hitters

SARISBURY Social Club A teenager Jordan Winbourne has deposed Town Champion Billy Castle as king of the big hitters in the snooker leagues.

The 17-year-old, pictured, who reached the quarter-finals of the IBSF World Under-21 Championship in China last month, posted the most breaks of 50 or more in league matches that were recorded on result cards received by the games secretary.

Winbourne's tally of 15 included a 136, which was the highest notified to the English Association of Snooker & Billiards this season.

Castle, on 14, dropped to second. Former Town Champion Mike Finn is third with ten.

But Castle did lead the century count with four of the 12, which smashed the 2011/12 record by 50 percent.

A total of 116 50-plus breaks, two less than last season, were returned by 37 different players.

15: Jordan Winbourne (Sarisbury Soc A)
14: Billy Castle (Churchills A)
10: Mike Finn (Churchills A)
9: John Mullane (Chandlers Ford Central A)
7: Adam Nash (Churchills A)
6: Alex Dunkley (Sarisbury Soc A)
4: Justin Mines (Eastleigh Rail), Ben Tanner (Eastleigh WM A)
3: Mark Houghton (Eastleigh Rail), Mitch Wade (Eastleigh Rail), Nick Jennings (Churchills A), Paul Dibden (Minstead Soc C), Paul Tavender (Park Gate RBL B), Wayne Muddiman (Chandlers Ford Central A)
2: Shaun Picton (Shirley Cons C), Tom Foley (Park Gate RBL B), Josh Barnes (Totton Rec B), Lee Ashbolt (Ashlett B), Nick Wood (Netley RBL), Ryan Longhurst (Romsey Coms B)
1: Andrew Jackson (Romsey Coms A), Alex Davis (Sway Soc), Chris Christodoulou (Park Gate RBL A), Drew Farminer (Romsey Coms B), Derek Webb (Ashlett B), Gary Martin (Churchills C), Jim Hardy (Netley RBL), Jerry Warren (Churchills B), Mark Benzey (Chandlers Ford Central A), Mark Britton (Ashlett C), Matt Osborne (Totton Rec B), Neal Blake (Sarisbury Soc A), Paul Naismith (Woolston T&L B), Robbie Jacks (Lyndhurst WM B), Steve Allen (Totton Rec B), Steve Cole (Park Gate RBL A), Wayne Chiverton (Hythe Club A).

STAT ATTACK: Ryan Longhurst (Romsey Comrades) is one of only five snooker players to have scored league and cup centuries in the Southampton & District Social Clubs League. The others are Mike Finn, Nick Jennings, Billy Castle and Bob Cooper.

AGM: ROMSEY Comrades Club hosts the league's AGM at 8.15pm on Thursday, August 22. The new season kicks off on September 9.

FREEMANTLE: Cribbage Division 3 champions.

RIVERSIDE: Cribbage Division 3 runners-up

TESTWOOD WMC: Snooker Division 3 champi-

EASTLEIGH RAILWAY INSTITUTE C: Burroughes & Watts snooker team KO champions

SNOOKER DIVISION 2 CHAMPIONS: Woolston Trades & Labour B

ACORN SOCIAL A: Cribbage Plate champions

PICTURES: TIM DUNKLEY

PETER MARCHI CUP SNOOKER CHAMPIONS: Sway Social, left.
CRIBBAGE CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS AND SIMONDS CUP WINNERS: Bitterne Park WMC A, top right.
SNOOKER DIVISION 3 RUNNERS-UP: Bitterne RBL D, right.

GOT A STORY TO TELL ABOUT YOUR SNOOKER, POOL, POKER

annual presentation evening

SNOOKER DIVISION 2 HIGH BREAK (58): Paul Naismith.

SNOOKER PREMIER CHAMPIONS: Romsey Comrades B, above.
TOP RIGHT: Ryan Longhurst Snooker Premier Division high break of 100.

CRIBBAGE DIVISION 1 CHAMPIONS: St Denys Cons C, above.
BELOW: Snooker Premier runners-up Lyndhurst Workmen's B.

CRIBBAGE DIVISION 2 CHAMPIONS: Holy Family Church.

SNOOKER DIVISION 3 HIGH BREAK (43): Graham George.

SNOOKER DIVISION 1 CHAMPIONS: Atherley Bowling Club B

SNOOKER DIVISION 1 HIGH BREAK (91): Ben Tanner.

SNOOKER DIVISION 1 RUNNERS-UP: Bitterne RBL A.

POOL LEAGUE AND CUP CHAMPIONS: Warren Social.

CRIBBAGE DIVISION TWO RUNNERS-UP: Shirley Cons A.

POKER CHAMPION: Ian Moody.

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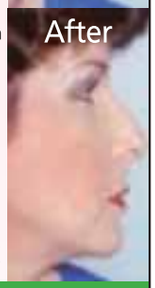

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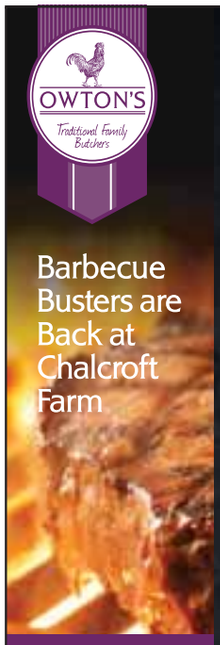

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SkyBet Championship

Blackburn 0 **Nottm For** 1
Henderson 90
HT 0-0 Att 14,496

Blackpool 1 **Barnsley** 0
Wiseman 90 og
HT 0-0 Att 14,268

Bolton 1 **Reading** 1
Pratley 14 | Blackman 51 pen
HT 1-0

Brighton 1 **Derby Cty** 2
Ulloa 17 | Martin 27,47
HT 1-1 Att 26,238

Charlton 0 **Middlesbro** 1
Jutkiewicz 72
HT 0-0

Huddersfld 1 **Q.P.R.** 1
Vaughan 35 | Hoilett 38
HT 1-1 Att 13,896

Ipswich 3 **Millwall** 0
Lowry 63 og
Smith 70
Anderson 83
HT 0-0 Att 17,183

Sheff Wed 1 **Burnley** 2
Prutton 71 | Ings 33, Vokes 38
HT 0-2 Att 22,282

Watford 6 **CHERRIES** 1
Angella 13,53 | Grabban 30
Deeney 56,88,90 pen
McGugan 66
HT 1-1

Yeovil 0 **Birminghm** 1
Burn 48
HT 0-0 Att 8,717

	HOME						AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Watford	2	1	0	0	6	1	1	0	0	1	0	6
Blackpool	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	3	1	6
Nottm For	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	6
Burnley	2	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	1	4
Derby Cty	2	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	1	4
Q.P.R.	2	1	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	1	1	4
Reading	2	1	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	1	1	4
Wigan	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	3
Ipswich	2	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	1	2	3
Leeds Utd	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Leicester	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	3
Middlesbro	2	0	0	1	1	2	1	0	0	1	0	3
Birminghm	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Yeovil	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
CHERRIES	**2**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**6**	**3**
Bolton	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	2
Blackburn	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Huddersfld	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
Brighton	2	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	1	1	2	0
Sheff Wed	2	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	1	1	2	0
Charlton	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Doncaster	1	0	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Millwall	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	3	0
Barnsley	2	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	1	0	1	0

SkyBet League One

	HOME						AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Leyton O	2	1	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	5	1	6
Peterboro	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	4	2	6
Walsall	2	1	0	0	3	1	1	0	0	1	0	6
Colchester	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	6
Bradford	2	1	0	0	4	0	0	1	0	2	2	4
Brentford	2	1	0	0	3	1	0	1	0	1	1	4
Crawley	2	1	0	0	3	2	0	1	0	3	3	4
M K Dons	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	4
Oldham	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	4	3	3
Swindon	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	3
Sheff Utd	2	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	1	3	3
Rotherham	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	3	2
Preston	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
Bristol C	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
Wolves	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Crewe	2	0	1	0	3	3	0	0	1	0	1	1
Port Vale	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
Tranmere	2	0	1	0	3	3	0	0	1	1	3	1
Shrewsbry	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	1
Gillingham	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stevenage	2	0	0	1	3	4	0	0	1	0	1	0
Notts Cnty	2	0	0	1	2	4	0	0	1	1	2	0
Carlisle	2	0	0	1	1	5	0	0	1	0	4	0
Coventry	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	-10

*Coventry deducted 10 points

Bradford 4 **Carlisle** 0
Yeates 20, Wells 25
Hanson 29
Jones 67
HT 3-0 Att 13,641

Brentford 3 **Sheff Utd** 1
Forshaw 35 | Collins 57
Grigg 63,76
HT 1-0 Att 7,316

Colchester 1 **Port Vale** 0
Massey 74
HT 0-0 Att 3,201

Leyton O 3 **Shrewsbry** 0
Mooney 57,63
Odubajo 90
HT 0-0 Att 4,414

M K Dons 1 **Crewe** 0
Bamford 20
HT 1-0 Att 6,911

Notts Cnty 2 **Peterboro** 4
Leacock 26 | Rowe 30
Arquin 90 pen | Barnett 54
McCann 58 pen
Assombalonga 71
HT 1-1 Att 6,582

Oldham 0 **Walsall** 1
Baxendale 25
HT 0-1 Att 4,538

Rotherham 0 **Preston** 0
HT 0-0 Att 8,454

Swindon 1 **Stevenage** 0
Luongo 26
HT 1-0 Att 7,133

Tranmere 3 **Crawley** 3
Thompson 16,44 | Walsh 10,81
Lowe 90 | Clarke 55
HT 2-1 Att 4,763

Wolves L **Gillingham** L
Griffiths 5,68 pen
Evans 26
Sako 31
HT 3-0 Att 19,102

SkyBet League Two

AFC Wimbledon 1 **Wycombe** 0
L Moore 37
HT 1-0 Att 4,335

Acc Stanley 2 **POMPEY** 2
Murphy 48,85 | Connolly 57,79 pen
HT 0-0 Att 2,531

Bristol R 0 **Scunthorpe** 0
HT 0-0 Att 6,259

Burton Albion 1 **Rochdale** 0
Lancashire 44 og
HT 1-0 Att 2,679

Chesterfld 2 **Cheltnham** 0
Roberts 23
Doyle 90
HT 1-0 Att 5,367

Dagenham 2 **York** 0
Murphy 36
Woodall 79
HT 1-0 Att 1,487

Hartlepool 0 **Southend** 1
Eastwood 5
HT 0-1 Att 3,479

Mansfield 0 **Exeter** 0
HT 0-0 Att 3,284

Morecambe 1 **Torquay** 1
Williams 25 | Hawley 55
HT 1-0 Att 1,555

Northmptn 3 **Newport County** 1
Blyth 25 | Washington 89
O Donovan 27
Deegan 84
HT 2-0 Att 4,319

Oxford Utd 2 **Bury** 1
Rose 34 | Soares 70
Mullins 82
HT 1-0

Plymouth 0 **Fleetwood Town** 2
Ball 10,12
HT 0-2 Att 7,280

	HOME						AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Oxford Utd	2	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	4	1	6
Fleetwood Tn	2	1	0	0	3	1	1	0	0	2	0	6
Chesterfld	2	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	2	0	6
Southend	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	6
Scunthorpe	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	4
Burton Albion	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	2	4
AFC Wim'don	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	4
Exeter	2	1	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	4
Rochdale	2	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	1	3
Newport Cnty	2	1	0	0	4	1	0	0	1	1	3	3
Northmptn	2	1	0	0	3	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
Dagenham	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	3	3
Wycombe	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	3
York	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	3
Torquay	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	2
Bristol R	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1
Morecambe	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
Cheltnham	2	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	1	0	2	1
Mansfield	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1
Acc Stanley	2	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	1	1	4	1
POMPEY	**2**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**4**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**2**	**2**	**1**
Bury	2	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	1	2	0
Plymouth	2	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	0
Hartlepool	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

Scottish Premiership

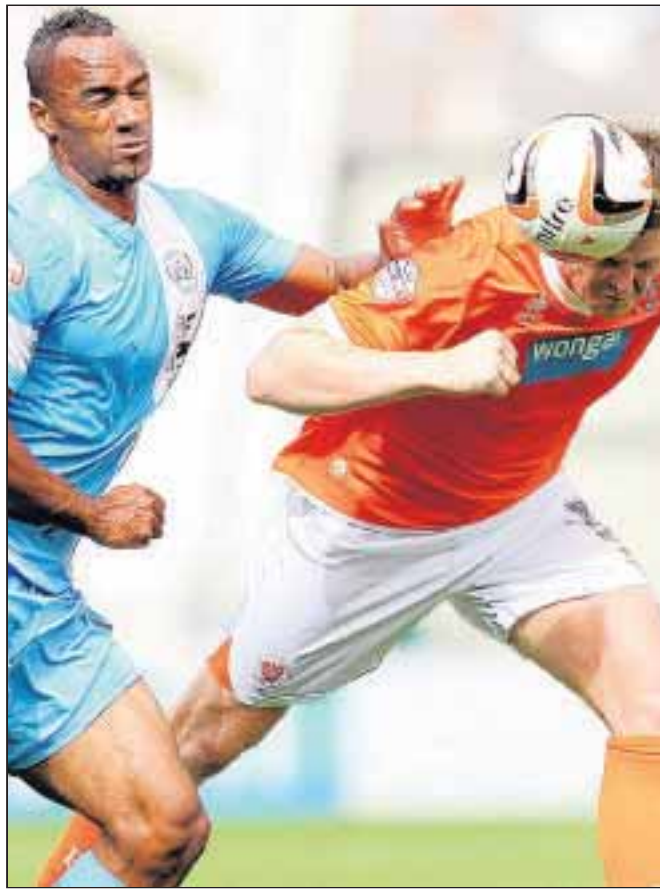
Celtic P **St Mirren** P
Postponed - new date to be confirmed.

Dundee Utd 0 **Inverness CT** 1
McKay 20
HT 0-1 Att 6,664

Ross Cnty 1 **Partick** 3
Carey 71 | Doolan 18, Lawless 53,59
HT 0-1 Att 3,331

	HOME						AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Inverness CT	2	1	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	1	0	6
Partick	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	1	4
Aberdeen	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Celtic	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Motherwell	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3
St Johnstn	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Dundee Utd	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Kilmarnock	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0
Hibernian	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
St Mirren	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0
Ross Cnty	2	0	0	1	1	3	0	0	1	1	2	0
Hearts	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	-15

*Hearts deducted 15 points for entering administration



Barnsley's Chris O'Grady and Blackpool's Gary MacKenzie (right) battle for the ball in the air during the Sky Bet Championship match at Bloomfield Road, Blackpool.

Scottish Championship

Alloa 1 **Livingston** 0
Simmons 42
HT 1-0

Dumbarton 1 **Falkirk** 1
Prunty 84 | McGrandles 61
HT 0-0

Morton 2 **Cowdenbth** 0
Hands 27
Campbell 66
HT 1-0 Att 1,817

Queen Sth 4 **Dundee** 3
Lyle 45 | MacDonald 8
McGuffie 59 pen | Gallacher 80
Russell 63 | Davidson 89
Paton 70
HT 1-1 Att 2,644

Raith 0 **Hamilton** 1
Keatings 68
HT 0-0 Att 1,652

Scottish League One

Arbroath 0 **Ayr Utd** 3
Moffat 13,17
Forrest 62
HT 0-2 Att 775

East Fife 0 **Dunfrmline** 1
Wallace 2 pen
HT 0-1 Att 1,927

Forfar 3 **Airdrieonians** 3
Malin 17 | Lister 32
McManus 53,54 | McLaren 48
Coult 65
HT 1-1 Att 704

Rangers 4 **Brechin** 1
Hegarty 2 | S Jackson 66
A Trialist 40
Black 82, Shiels 85
HT 2-0 Att 44,380

Stenhsmuir 1 **Stranraer** 0
Gemmell 31
HT 1-0 Att 483

Scottish League Two

Clyde 1 **Berwick** 0
Daly 73
HT 0-0 Att 469

Elgin 1 **Albion R** 2
Gunn 87 | Walker 43
Crawford 53 pen
HT 0-1 Att 541

Montrose 1 **Stirling A** 2
Webster 38 | Fulton 7
Ferry 75
HT 1-1 Att 486

Peterhead 2 **Annan Athletic** 2
Gilfillan 56 | Hopkirk 24,57
Cox 85
HT 0-1 Att 504

Queen Park 1 **E Stirling** 3
Spittal 45 | Thomson 26 pen
Townsley 43,51
HT 1-2 Att 476

The Skrill Premier

Barnet 3 **Chester FC** 0
Gambin 46
Hyde 63,73
HT 0-0 Att 2,543

Dartford 1 **Alfreton Town** 0
Birchall 42
HT 1-0 Att 1,202

Forest Grn 8 **Hyde** 0
Kelly 25,29,76
Wright 33
Norwood 38
Taylor 60,72
Barnes-Homer 71
HT 4-0 Att 1,158

Grimsby 1 **Aldershot** 1
Hannah 81 pen | Oastler 58
HT 0-0

Hereford 1 **Braintree Town** 1
Walker 79 | Smith 8 og
HT 0-1 Att 2,033

Kiddrmnstr 3 **Gateshead** 1
Gash 13 | Brodie 43
Gittings 60
Dunkley 81
HT 1-1 Att 2,110

Macclesfld 0 **Nuneaton** 1
Moult 23
HT 0-1 Att 1,585

SALISBURY 0 **Tamworth** 1
Thomas 32
HT 0-1 Att 958

Southport 1 **Luton** 0
Milligan 22
HT 1-0 Att 2,210

Woking 0 **Lincoln City** 0
HT 0-0 Att 1,845

Wrexham 2 **Welling U** 1
Clarke 17 | Healy 43
Ogleby 83
HT 1-1 Att 4,011

Grey panels indicate High-scoring games

POOLS CHECK

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	L	1	1	3●	1	1	3●	1	L	1	1	1	1	1	1	L	1	1	1	1	2	1	3●	L	1
	L	2	2	1	3●	2	3●	2	L	1	3●	2	1	1	2	L	2	1	3●	1	2	1	1	1	1

	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49
	3●	2	1	1	1	1	2	3●	1	1	1	1	L	L	L	1	1	3●	1	1	1	1	1	1
	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	L	L	L	1	1	2	1	3●	2	1	1	1

Local non-league results

SKRILL CONFERENCE
Premier:
Barnet 3 Chester 0
Dartford 1 Alfreton 0
Forest Green 8 Hyde 0
Grimsby 1 Aldershot 1
Hereford 1 Braintree Town 1
Kidderminster 3 Gateshead 1
Macclesfield 0 Nuneaton 1
Salisbury 0 Tamworth 1
Southport 1 Luton 0
Woking 0 Lincoln City 0
Wrexham 2 Welling 1
SYDENHAM WESSEX LEAGUE
Premier Division:
Brockenhurst 0 Alresford 2
Hamworthy Utd 3 Bemerton 2
Horndean 0 Blackfield & Langley 5
Newport IoW 2 Fawley 2
AFC Romsey 0 Moneyfield 1
Verwood 1 Christchurch 1
Whitchurch 1 Lymington Town 2
Winchester 2 AFC Portchester 0
Division One:
Cowes Sports 4 Andover N S 1
Laverstock & Ford 1 US Portsmouth 2
Pewsey Vale 1 E Cowes Vics 3
Ringwood 1 Amesbury 1
Stockbridge 1 New Milton 3
Tadley Calleva 2 Hyth & Dibden 2
SWL CUP
Fleet Spurs 1 Team Solent 8
Hayling Utd 2 Fareham 1
Totton & Eling 1 Petersfield 4
PUMA ENGINEERING HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE
Premier Division:
Baffins Milton Rovers 5 AFC Stoneham 1
Bishops Waltham 3 Liss 1
Clanfield 2 Hedge End Rangers 1
Colden Common 5 QK Southampton 2
Fleetlands 2 Overton 1
Headley United 3 Bournemouth Sports 0
Liphook 4 Otterbourne 2
Paulsgrove 3 Aldermaston 1
Winchester Castle 1 Locks Heath 0

ISSN 0969-563X 32>
9 770969 563069
P 55p ISSN 0969-563X

Published by Newsquest Media (Southern) Ltd, and printed at Newsquest (Southern) Ltd, from its offices at Newspaper House, Test Lane, Redbridge, Southampton, SO16 9JX. Telephone: 023 8042 4800. Registered at the Post Office as a newspaper. 122nd year. No. 37449